■ SAT SPECIAL/A2-1
Superman's seminal story told anew

■ WORLD/A22
Pope hits China over bishop ordination

■ BUSINESS/B1
Inflation slowed down to 7.1% in April

■ SPORTS/A26
Wie is first woman to make men's cut since 1945

Hunger level among Pinoys at all-time high, says survey

By Kate Pedroso
PDI Research

MORE FILIPINOS ARE GOING HUNGRY, according to a recent survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations.

Some 7.8 million families in the country experienced having had nothing to eat at least once in the past three months, as the hunger level in the

NEWS/A4

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Pacquiao in for new fight, throws hat into political ring

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY —With Manny Pacquiao's money, popularity and charisma, this new fight is in the bag.

We're not talking about

PACQUIAO/A4

Aragoncillo admits spying for GMA foes

Erap, Ping named co-plotters in bid to oust 'Penguin'

ARTIST'S SKETCH of Leandro Aragoncillo, former White House and FBI staffer, who has pleaded guilty to passing classified information to opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY—A Filipino-American intelligence analyst admitted Thursday that for five years he passed top secret information gleaned from White House and Federal Bureau of Investigation computers to conspirators he said were trying to overthrow President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Leandro Aragoncillo, 47, a naturalized US citizen who was born in the Philippines, pleaded guilty to a four-count indictment.

The conspirators used code words to refer to various people, including calling Ms Arroyo "The Penguin," Aragoncillo admitted.

Aragoncillo, shackled at the feet and wearing green jail garb, himself did not identify them.

But according to documents filed in the US District Court in Newark, they included former President Joseph Estrada, opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson and former House Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella.

A justice department official said the supposed conspirators included another politician who served in the Philippine House of Representatives, and a mayor of a city near Manila.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada IV Ejercito, son of the former President, has admitted receiving e-mails

ARAGONCILLO/A8

ESTRADA: Unindicted co-conspirator

LACSON: Unindicted co-conspirator

Erap et al. could face rebellion raps—DOJ

By Armand N. Nocum

OUSTED PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada yesterday denied any role in a US espionage case dealing with alleged theft of classified documents, but the Department of Justice said only events would tell if his hands were clean.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the government would file rebellion charges against Estrada, Sen. Panfilo Lacson and others if there was evidence that the espionage case involving a Filipino-American in the United States was linked to plots to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Any case filed here will strengthen the case there," Gonzalez told the Inquirer, commenting on the plea bargaining deal struck between US authorities and former federal Bureau of Investigation intelligence analyst Leandro Aragoncillo.

The Filipino-born former FBI officer has pleaded guilty to passing secrets to alleged plotters in the Philippines whom federal prosecutors identified as Estrada, Lacson and former House Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella.

Estrada told the Inquirer the information he got from Aragoncillo was not classified and dealt with matters of public knowledge.

Lacson did not answer calls or reply to text messages. He has also maintained that the information passed on to him by Michael Ray Aquino, his former police aide and a coaccused of Aragoncillo, was not classified.

Calls to Fuentebella also were not answered.

INAP/A8

Batasan 5 face arrest if they leave House

By Tarra V. Quismundo, Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Michael Lim Ubac

DESPITE A JUDGE'S ORDER REJECTING their inclusion in a rebellion case filed by the Department of Justice, the five left-wing party-list lawmakers in the protective custody of the House of Representatives will be arrested once they leave the premises, police warned yesterday.

Senior Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said it had a standing order from the DOJ to arrest the so-called "Batasan 5."

Judge Jenny Lind Delorino of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 137 said her resolution issued Thursday afternoon had no implication on the continued stay at the Batasan complex of Representatives Satur Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, Rafael Mariano of Anakpawis, and Liza Maza of Gabriela.

"Nothing at all, wala," the judge told the Inquirer. "Their custody was not an issue in the amended information being filed

BATASAN 5/A4

Stocks post biggest gain in 5 years

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SHARE PRICES SURGED BY 4.22 percent yesterday, their biggest single-day gain in five years, as foreign investors bought into blue chips following a slew of positive economic and corporate data.

It was the fourth session in a row that the market has registered hefty gains, soaring by a total of 198.7 points since April 28.

The benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange composite index jumped by 98.98 points or 2,470.24, its best finish since July 22, 1998 when the index hit 2,468.62.

"Foreign funds inflow is quite strong. We didn't expect it to be this strong. Positive corporate and economic results are helping reassure investors of the market's prospects," Oliver Plana, head of sales at Asiasec Equities Inc., said.

The previous biggest single-day rise was on Jan 22, 2001 when the market soared 255.13 points or 17.16 percent after former President Joseph Estrada was ousted from power.

"The global arena is awash with cash and so is the local market and right now, the best hedge to inflation seems to be the stock market," said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings.

Inflation rate slowed to 7.1 percent in April from 7.6 percent in March as the rise in prices of food and other items was tem-

STOCKS/A4

'Golden Buddha' heirs suffer setback in US suit

SAN FRANCISCO—NEARLY 10,000 victims of human rights abuses by former Philippine ruler Ferdinand Marcos' government should share the $30 million to $40 million that heirs of a treasure hunter imprisoned by Marcos had sought for themselves, a US court ruled on Thursday.

Roger Rosas, a locksmith turned treasure hunter, found gold he claimed to be part of the so-called Yamashita treasure, named for a Japanese general who during World War II allegedly hauled booty from across Asia to the Philippines.

Marcos, who ruled the Philippines from 1966-1986, allegedly took it and had Rosas imprisoned.

In a lawsuit, Rosas' heirs argued the former ruler's riches could in part be traced to the gold, and sought compensation from an estimated $35 million to $40 million in a Merrill Lynch account established by a Marcos shell company.

But a three-judge panel of the US 9th Circuit Court of Appeals held the heirs should be considered part of the 9,539-person class that won a $2 billion award against the Marcos estate over human rights abuses under his rule.

The decision will allow the class to divide the $35 million to $40 million, marking the first opportunity for victims of human rights

GOLDEN/A4

ENVOY'S VISIT
US Ambassador Kristie Kenney and PDI Chair Marixi Prieto take note of an amusing point raised over an afternoon snack Friday. Now six weeks into her posting, the envoy, along with officials of the US Embassy, visited the PDI main office in Makati and met with the paper's executives and editors.

PNP says most of killings in media solved

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WITH THE ADMINISTRATION REAPING INTERnational criticism for the rising number of media murders, the Philippine National Police maintained that most of the cases had been solved although the killers had yet to be convicted.

The PNP yesterday said nearly 60 percent of its recorded cases of media murders since 1986 took place in the last five years under President Macapagal-Arroyo's watch.

Of the 69 recorded murders, 40 occurred from 2001 to the present, while the rest took place from 1986 to 2000, it said.

However, 39 cases, mostly recent ones, were now considered "closed" because the PNP had charged the suspected killers in court, said the police spokesperson, Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao.

Of the 40 media murders since 2001, 30 cases were considered closed, he added.

Pagdilao did not disclose how many cases were the suspected killers actually convicted and sentenced to a prison term.

PNP SAYS/A4

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Mostly fair in Luzon and Palawan with cooling in the morning; mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy. Mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Second FRONTPAGE

18 RP sailors missing off S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG—RESCUE WORKERS ARE INcreasingly worried about the fate of 26 missing seamen—18 of them Filipinos—whose ship sank off South Africa's southeast coast more than 30 hours ago, according to a search coordinator.

"We continued our search operations through the night but unfortunately we have found nothing," said Maritime Search and Rescue chief Nadiv Hotez yesterday.

"The search will continue throughout the day with ships and an air force C-130 Hercules but we are worried about their safety and weather conditions are deteriorating," he said.

The Alexandrow T, sailing from Brazil to China with a load of iron ore, broke up and sank on Wednesday night in heavy seas some 300 nautical miles off the eastern port city of Port Elizabeth.

Seven of the bulk carrier's 33 crew members were rescued on Wednesday and Thursday.

In Manila, acting Labor Secretary Manuel Imson confirmed in a statement yesterday that six Filipino seafarers had been rescued and were in safe condition.

He named the six as Allan G. Dosch, 40, engineer; Albert S. Miranda, bosun; Joe M. Alemania, clerkboy; Elmer B. Paulino, deckboy; Emmanuel L. Vergara, deck cadet; and Mark G. Montano, engine boy. **were all crewmembers of the bulk carrier "Mv Alexandrow T."**

The other seven rescued comes from Romania, and Dmitri Yanakidis, the deputy head of mission at the Greek embassy in Pretoria.

But 26 members of the crew, including four Greek citizens**, who abandoned ship** after sounding May Day distress, were still missing on Friday.

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Gulberto Jacapa said a hotline in the ship's mooring agent in **the Philippines, the InterCaltex Maritime Enterprises Inc,** which listed the **crew for the Alexandrow, had been established** so that families of the missing **would be updated.**

Hotez said the team would be suffering from severe **sea lag** and would therefore have difficulty **resuming the intensive** of search operations.

"They have been in the water for 35 hours by now," Hotez said early on. Friday morning. "They are getting into a situation where they won't even be able to attract the attention of those looking for them."

The bulk carrier, which had a gross tonnage of 93,000, went on a distress signal on Wednesday afternoon saying it was taking in water. It sank a few hours later in stormy seas.

The majority of the crew on the **vessel,** which was operated by a Greek company and registered in St. Vincent and Grenadines, is believed to be from the Philippines. The **Philippines is the world's biggest** supplier of merchant seafarers.

Hanks confirmed yesterday that 26 of the missing were Filipinos.

Also missing are the captain, his **second-in-command and two mechanics,** according to the Greek merchant marine ministry in Athens.

Imson directed the Philippine **Overseas Employment Administration** (POEA) and the Overseas Workers **Welfare Administration** (OWWA) to coordinate the necessary efforts to assist the seafarers and their families.

He also asked OWWA to facilitate the provision of valuable welfare assistance to the seafarers.

Under OWWA rules, documented overseas Filipino workers are entitled to a life insurance of P100,000, an accident insurance of P200,000, disability pay and other benefits at OWWA members.

"We shall ensure that the 62 rescued seamen are repatriated safely as soon as possible to the Philippines even as we coordinate efforts to monitor the continuing search operations for the missing seafarers," Imson said. *AFP with a report from Jerome Aning and Abdel Franz C. Qasolda (trainees).*

Territory issue snags Gov't-MILF peace talks in KL

KUALA LUMPUR— THE PHILIPpine government and Muslim rebels ended informal peace talks in Malaysia on Thursday **without resolving the stubborn** issue of territory and jurisdiction over Muslim land.

But at the end of three days of talks aimed at ending nearly 40 years of conflict, the two sides aired progress on issues such as the sharing of natural resources and governance in the Moslem homeland in the southern island of Mindanao.

"It achieved significant progress ... with the exception of territorial delimitation, which was highly technical in nature and requires further deliberation," government negotiators said the Malaysian Liberation Front (MILF) rebels in joint statement.

MILF's delegation to the talks was led by Mohagher **Iqbal while the government** team was headed by chief negotiator Silvestre Afable.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu **said yesterday they were not able** to resolve the issue on territory **"particularly the determination** and delineation of the areas to be placed under the proposed Bangsamoro entity."

He said the negotiators admitted they needed more time but would "guide them" in resolving the issues on territory.

Despite the failure of both sides to reach an agreement, Kabalu said there were significant gains in the talks on the issue of ancestral domain.

"It's a limited talk and it would eventually lead to the resolution of the issue," he said.

Kabalu said the three-day discussions held in the Malaysian capital were frank, cordial and showed the intention of both sides to settle the issue, which is considered the remaining major obstacle to peace between the government and the MILF.

"It subsumed the gains already made on the issues of the ancestral domain," Kabalu said.

Under the 2001 Tripoli Agreement, the government agreed to recognize the ancestral domain claims of the Moro people.

Kabalu said that so far at the MILF was concerned, the peace talks "were about 99 percent complete."

However, both sides did not say when talks hosted by Malaysia would resume. They had hoped to break the deadlock this week and fix a date for the signing of an agreement on ancestral domain, which would open the way for official peace pact by September. *Jeff Ploy Mateo, AFP, Mindanao Bureau and Reuters*

5 suspected NPAs presented in court, charged

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

TAGAYTAY CITY—AFTER BEING held incommunicado for almost a week, five suspected members of the New People's Army (NPA) were finally presented in court yesterday and charged with robbery for allegedly planning to use terror during the Labor Day celebration.

Charged with rebellion by the police before the sala of Tagaytay City Regional Trial Court Judge Edwin Tarlit were Arlene Barrientos, Saul Alejandro Pinpin, Hiel Custodio, Kim Vhalus and Michael Mariano.

It was the first time they were brought out of detention since they were presented to the media in Camp Crame on Monday.

The accused arrived in handcuffs in separate vehicles escorted by a composite police team of the Calabarzon regional police office in Camp Vicente Lim.

Tagaytay assistant prosecutor Ernesto Viña said the police filed an amended complaint to include another person whose he did not identify.

Viña said the accused were under inquest proceedings last May 2.

But he said no preliminary investigation was conducted after the accused refused to sign a waiver that would have given them a chance to present their counter-affidavits within 15 days.

Militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Cavite and the Kalipunan ng mga Maguindra sa Rehiyo Timugang-silangan (ka) accused the police and the military of concocting evidence against the five suspects, they said, were ordinary peasant leaders and civilians.

The police said the accused were allegedly involved in the plot to grab power and topple the Arroyo administration last May 1.

Chief Supt. Prospero Nabia, Calabarzon police director, said the five will be transferred to Camp Crame.

Meanwhile, the families of the five, now referred to as the Tagaytay 5, asked the government to allow them to see their loved ones.

In an e-mailed statement to the Inquirer, they said the five were not arrested but abducted by police and military operatives on April 28. *With Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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STOCK MARKET hits five-year high following yesterday's big gain.

Stocks post biggest gain in 5 years

From page A1

parcel, the Sarawat Securities Office (PSO) said.

"It's a confluence of several factors. Basically it's a matter of people looking at equities again as an attractive investment," Plana said.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said that investor sentiment was also boosted by expectations that the economy as gauged by the gross domestic product, would grow by more than 5.5 percent in the first quarter of the year because of improved performance of the agriculture sector. The 2005 first-quarter growth was 4.9 percent.

Dividend said the market was also buoyed by the decision of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas on Thursday not to raise its overnight borrowing rate.

"The fact that the central bank did not move overnight interest rates in their policy meeting yesterday may have helped," said Plana.

Plana said the market, now at a fresh seven-year high, may have also gotten a boost from media reports that US pension fund California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) had retained the Philippines in its list of permissible investment destinations.

CalPERS, which is administered as the biggest US pension fund, ranked the Philippines' Wilshire Associates, one of the world's leading consulting and management firms, to review and guide the pension fund's flow of investments to 23 emerging markets.

In its latest review, Wilshire assigned to the Philippines a composite score of "3.113," or 0.13 of a percentage point higher than the "3" threshold rating that Wilshire gave to the Philippines last year.

With the score, the Philippines moved up to 14th in ranking among the 23 emerging markets included in the Wilshire study. The Philippines ranked 16th in the previous study as the country barely made it to the threshold mark.

Fund Joseph Garcia, chief investment officer at ING Investment Management, said foreign inflows surged back into equity markets since Philippine stocks lagged behind other Asian markets.

"Philippine stocks have lagged behind regional equity markets over the past year. Foreign funds have been underweight but with the improving macroeconomic fundamentals, investors are also positioning ahead of quarterly earnings reports," Garcia said.

Francis Lim, president and chief executive officer of the Philippine Stock Exchange, said the dramatic rise in stock prices, especially during the last four months, "reflects investors' confidence on the Philippine economy."

"The economic reforms that the government is pursuing in place, along with reforms that we in the PSE are implementing, have started to bear fruit," Lim declared.

Lim believes favorable developments in the political front, like the peaceful holding of Labor Day celebrations, have convinced investors of the country's political stability.

"Our show of political maturity, combined with sound economic fundamentals, among corporate performance and more transparent stock market operations, will definitely fuel a further surge in stock prices," he added. "I believe we have the beginnings here of a bull run, provided, of course, that we maintain all these factors conducive to business."

A total of 2.09 billion shares worth P4.36 billion were traded yesterday.

The broader all-shares index closed up 49.87 points or 1.51 to 3,351.73.

Gainers led decliners 89 to 42, with 56 stocks unchanged.

Bank of the Philippine Islands was the top-traded stock, up P4 to P66.50. Its affiliate Bank Land closed P1.50 higher at P1.470.

Their parent Ayala Corp. rose P27.50 to P430.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone hit a fresh record closing high, adding P65 or P1.125.

San Miguel A shares, open to local investors, were up 50 centavos at P64.50 while San Miguel B shares, available to foreign and local investors, gained 92 to P84. With AFP Reuters reports

'Golden Buddha' heirs suffer setback in US suit

From page A1

shares under Marcos to tap his estate for compensation, said Robert Swift, the Philadelphia-based lead attorney for the class.

Victory is sweet

The lawyer for Roxas' heirs, Yan Caliboyet of Los Angeles, said he was considering an appeal.

"This is sweet victory for Filipino victims of human rights abuses," Swift said. "We struggled with many obstacles for years to overcome many legal obstacles."

The Philippine government claimed the money belonged to its treasury, but the court said it had no legal right to the account.

Human rights advocate Marie Hilao-Enriquez said the US court's award was a welcome development.

Enriquez, however, said that before the distribution could happen, the Philippine government should first distribute their share of the Marcos wealth placed in the national treasury.

Is money gone?

"Why are they dilly-dallying in distributing among the claimants?" Enriquez told the Inquirer. "Many are saying that the money is already gone as a result of the fertilizer fund scam," she added, referring to the alleged fraudulent allocation of P728 million supposedly for farm inputs in 2004.

Rod Domingo, counsel for the victims, said he and Swift planned to file a motion for the court to order the immediate distribution of the award to the victims.

He said the chief obstacle to the recovery of the Merrill Lynch money was the Philippine government itself which had claim to it but, according to Domingo, did not offer any proof of ownership.

Government blamed

The government's claim, Domingo said, delayed litigation of the case for many years.

"Despite lack of evidence to support its claim, the government repeatedly sought to prevent a US court from adjudicating the case. It is sad that the Philippine government delayed this litigation for so many years with outrageous claims that the US court ultimately found had no merit," Domingo said.

A $200-million package promised by the previous administration in the form of a bill to compensate the human rights victims is still pending in the House of Representatives. Reuters, AFP, with reports from Jun-Jun Burdeos, Nicole Tigas

IN THE KNOW

In April 1987, soldiers allegedly acting under orders of then President Ferdinand Marcos raided the house of treasure hunter Eugenio Bagcal in Digos City and seized the six-coiled, bronze Buddha, a statue believed by locals and by the war bird of Japanese Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita. Prosecutors say Bagcal found the statue in a tunnel near Baguio General Hospital in late December 1945.

'Detachable head'

Court records showed the arrest was based on a search warrant issued by Judge Flo Marcos, an uncle of the late President.

A tattooed face or eyeball over the stolen statue's chest of Buddha, and buried under the regional trial court in Baguio. Roxas, however, believed that this was a different Buddha, including that the three-foot high Buddha he found had a detachable head and a hollow interior and was filled with gems.

The case went after Family against family. Roxas' In other Jose claimed there was no Golden Buddha. Roxas' sons, Henry and Gerardo, maintained there existed such statue, calling the Buddhist court custody was a fake.

No Golden Buddha?

In May 1996, Judge Antonio Reyes ruled that there was no Golden Buddha and ordered the release of the statue in court custody to some Henry and Gerardo and to other Jose.

The statue remains at the Justice Building Baguio because the head among the three has not been settled.

In July 1996, a Baguio jury awarded $22 billion in damages to Golden Buddha Corp., an Atlanta-based group of investors, over the loss of the Buddha statue. Roxas had turned his claim over to the corporation so that the right to win back the Golden Buddha would continue even after his death.

Legal fight goes on

Cases filed in Pasadena in May 1983.

In December 1988, the Baguio Supreme Court reversed the 1988 judgment, ruling that the evidence was too speculative to support Roxas' claim.

The Roxas heirs have continued to pursue their legal claim abroad, alleging in August that the late Treasury Secretary's damage suit against the Marcos estate still be resolved.

Joey Salviano, PDI Research

Hunger level among Pinoys . . .

From page A1

country hit an all-time high of 16.5 percent in March 2006.

The figure surpassed the previous peak of 16.3 percent recorded in December 2005. Hunger has been on the rise since the end of 2003.

The number of Filipinos going hungry declined from 16.1 percent in March 2005 to the record low of 9.1 percent in September 2005. Then the hunger surge started to increase.

Meanwhile, almost 700,000 families or 4.2 percent, reported experiencing severe hunger — defined in the survey as going hungry often or always — in the past three months.

Moderate hunger — defined as experiencing hunger once or a few times in the last three months — was at 12.7 percent, translating to roughly 2.1 million families.

Hunger was highest in Mindanao at 21 percent, Visayas registered 16 percent, while hunger in the rest of Luzon was at 14.7 percent.

Metro Manila was common at 10.3 percent. It had reached a record low of 3.4 percent in March 2004, but then people started getting hungrier in the second half of 2004 and then posting a record 21 percent in December 2005.

The SWS survey also surveyed the public's awareness and personal experience with Sinibasan Sutis, Inasa T-million households or 42 percent said they were aware of the project.

Tindahan Natin provides cheap, good quality rice and noodles through stores jointly established and manned by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Barangay Council, the National Food Authority and the City Municipal Social Welfare and Development Offices.

Meanwhile, about 1.3 million families or 9 percent reported that "Sinibasan Natin" program in their areas, while 4 percent or over 650,000 families reported having bought items from these stores.

The survey was conducted from March 6 to 14 using face-to-face interviews of 1,200 adults divided into random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, with sampling error margins of plus-minus 3 percent for national percentages and plus-minus 6 percent for area percentages.

NINTH BIGGEST BANK

UnionBank to buy iBank for ₱13.5B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AMOITE GROUP'S UNION BANK of the Philippines is set to buy up to 100 percent of International Exchange Bank for about ₱13.5 billion, a deal that would lend new fresh energy and create the country's ninth biggest bank.

UnionBank director and COO of parent conglomerate Aboitiz Equity Ventures (AEV) Erramon Aboitiz told the business that the bank signed yesterday afternoon a memorandum of agreement with the major shareholders of iBank to buy a controlling stake in the medium-sized bank.

UBP also disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange last night that its board of directors had approved the purchase of at least 67 percent up to 100 percent of iBank's voting shares at ₱42.50 per share.

The purchase shall be implemented within 30 days and subject to regulatory and other pertinent approvals.

The likely merger between the two medium-sized lenders would shore up UBP's assets to about ₱300 billion and boost its ranking among the country's biggest banks from 13th to 9th, edging out the Bachrach Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

Aboitiz said UBP had enough excess to pay for the acquisition of iBank.

"The shareholders of UnionBank will not dish out anything. UnionBank will buy from its own resources," he said.

He said that UnionBank saw a "tremendous" synergy with iBank in the retail business, branching and deposit generation.

"We chose iBank because we think the combination is very good. It's very strong in many areas, like as far as deposit is concerned and their culture is compatible with ours. The strategy of retail necessary is similar to ours. We think it's a well-matched," Aboitiz said.

He added that UBP will make a tender offer to minority shareholders of iBank at the same price.

iBank ranks 17th among the country's biggest banks with assets of about P63 billion as against UnionBank's P1.06 billion. iBank has about 75 branches while UnionBank has 111 branches.

Among iBank's shareholders are JTKC Equities Inc. (25.82 percent); Ideacorp Corp. (17.22 percent); Jupiter Industrial Inc. (16.44 percent); Crossdale Properties Inc. (9.34 percent); and, Philippine Realty & Holdings Corp. (9.02 percent).

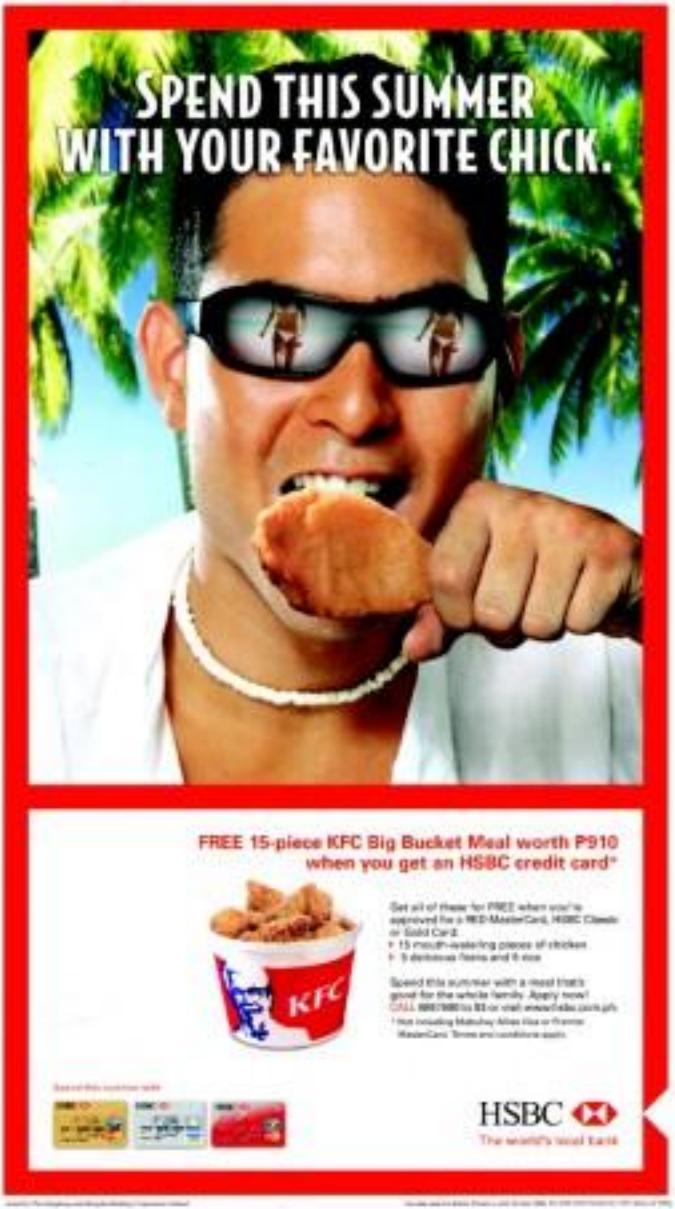
Joseph Rosas, president of Eagle Equities Inc., said it was a good deal for UnionBank, which effectively agreed to pay 1.8 times iBank's book value.

"UnionBank already has a great investment vision. This gives them an opportunity to grow their commercial banking business," Rosas said.

Although UnionBank is the bigger bank, iBank's loan portfolio is more than double at ₱20 billion versus the UBP's ₱11 billion.

UnionBank, capitalized at ₱19 billion, earlier attempted to bid for the Philippine National Bank but its offer was rejected by the group of Johnson Angkaw Lenlee Tan which exercised its preemptive right as the existing dominant shareholder.

As of end-2005, iBank's return on equity stood at 13.26 percent while UnionBank's ROE was at 14.69 percent during the same period.



STILL AT THE BARRICADES. members of the Batasan 5 confer with their lawyer, Romeo Capulong, on their next move following a court decision to reclude them from the rebellion charges filed by the government. PHOTOGRAPHER

Batasan 5 face arrest if they leave House

From page A1

and the resolution granting the motion to probe it are ... The court has no jurisdiction over them, never had jurisdiction over them, so the court has no authority to make any pronouncements over their detention or their choice to seek protective custody."

Upon the advice of their lawyers, the Batasan 5 chose to stay in the House for a few more days, or even weeks, to give themselves time to untangle the legal mess.

"We seized members as shiva: you cannot imprison a movement," declared Mariano, who is also national chair of the militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

He said it was only right that the rebellion case filed against them on April 21 be junked, "because it was nothing but junk."

Motion to reconsider

Defensor had ruled against the DOJ motion seeking to include the Batasan 5, ex-Sen. Gerardo "Gringo" Honasan and 40 others in an earlier rebellion case when only two stood on the accused.

Honasan, an ex-army colonel who was involved in several bloody coup attempts in the 1980s, is in hiding.

In a 20-page resolution, Defensor ruled that the amended criminal information was to last one, and thus could not supplant the original one where only Sandiganbayan Rep. Crispin Beltran and Int. Lawrence Dan Asuncion charged.

The resolution retained the original information against Beltran, who is detained at Camp Crame, and Int. Jun, a recaptured member of the Abu Sayyaf extremist group.

Yesterday, Senior State Prosecutor Ramona Bautista said he would seek reconsideration of Defensor's resolution as well as her inhibition from the case.

"We will file a motion for reconsideration. That's resolution of the judge to not an acquittal for the accused ... and it's not final and executory. We honestly believe the judge erroneously ruled over the case, with due respect to her," Bautista said.

If Defensor decides to inhibit, a new judge will handle the DOJ appeal, he said.

Defensor herself said she would act on any motion the DOJ would make regarding her resolution. "It's the prosecution's prerogative," she said.

Beltran said the motion was on its way to Defensor's court yesterday afternoon. But it had yet to be filed when the court office closed at 5 p.m.

Police undeterred

Dr. Int. Lamon said the PNP-CIDG unit was detained by the court's decision because the arrest order was based on a DOJ resolution approving the filing of rebellion charges against the Batasan 5.

Neither did the Supreme Court's Wednesday ruling on Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, which pronounced unconstitutional the arrest of protesters, the dispersal of rallies and the raid on the Daily Tribune office, have slowdown on the rebellion case, he said.

"We will act on the standing order of the DOJ," he said. "They will be arrested."

According to Dr. Int. Santos, police do not need a warrant to arrest the Batasan 5 because they are accused of rebellion, which has been considered a continuing crime since the commission in progress (CIP) rule.

Dr. Int. Santos suggested that the DOJ file new information before the court.

"I can't dictate on the DOJ but as far as we're concerned, there's a valid basis for [the five lawmakers'] arrest, unless the court orders their release," he said.

The Batasan 5 have asked the Supreme Court for a restraining order on the PNP and the DOJ. But the tribunal has yet to act on the petition.

"In the meantime, the DOJ is not prevented to act. In resolution stands," Dr. Int. Santos said.

'Misconception'

The Batasan 5 have been taking refuge at the House since Feb. 27, after the DOJ linked them to the alleged left-right plot to oust then President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The supposed conspiracy prompted Ms Arroyo to declare a rambling state of emergency on Feb. 24.

Asked to comment on reports that her reelection was tantamount to ordering the release of the Batasan 5, Defensor said: "That's a misconception. Why don't you ask them what's keeping them there?"

She added: "I did not make any ruling as to their current situation. I cannot speak for them. They're there; I don't care why they are there. I have nothing to do with it. The case have has nothing to do with it."

But House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, who is on vacation in the United States, says a statement saying Defensor's resolution said collectively resolved the rebellion case.

He said that the Batasan 5 "should now be freed without threat of being arrested," and that the resolution "liberates [the House leadership] from taking responsibility" over them.

"Protective custody has legally ended with the dismissal of the cases, and they ought to be free to go," Nograles said, adding that it would be "a relief to the House leadership to grant the five lawmakers their freedom."

BATASAN SIXTH: Rep. Teddy Casiño plays with his son Elias during a break in their closed-door meeting. PHOTOGRAPHER

In a text message sent shortly after Defensor issued her resolution, the Batasan 5 and Beltran said, "We have won the first round of this legal battle. Clearly, there is no case against us and no injustice has been done. We have yet to savor and deride our new moves. During all the legal and moral back-to-gut cost of this confinement, we will surely take daily into steps in pursuing our freedom."

'Not now'

At a hastily called press conference yesterday, Bayan said: "Allies are not running out! Of course we're coming out, but not now."

She assured reporters that she and her colleagues would not leave the House on the sly and would inform "journalists in the whole world."

Ocampo decried the deployment of an all-armed police contingent and the imposition of stricter security measures at the House starting Thursday night.

"That will not happen," he said in denying a planned escape. "We will not give [the authorities] that benefit."

According to Ocampo, the Arroyo administration was saddled with "many setbacks" and was badly in need of a whipping boy.

"[It] might save us as in its ire and frustration over the three worst adverse rulings by the Supreme Court" on Executive Order No. 464, Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, and the calibrated preemptive response policy, he said.

Ocampo said the decision of the Batasan 5 to stay in the House was the most prudent move at this point given the administration's "consistency to disrespecting laws."

Mariano cited a "Machiavellian 1017 mentality" that allowed authorities to use "brutal and even fascist machinations to trifle with our legitimate rights as individuals and representatives of our constituents."

"The militant lawmakers said they would closely study the steps to be taken by the DOJ, but they're sure to "exercise in a political game where the rule of law does not exist."

"We need a short time to study when is the right time to go out," Ocampo said.

Gringo still has influence–Senga

ZAMBOANGA CITY—GEORGIO "Gringo" Honasan can still manage to influence soldiers and officers into joining a plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga said on Thursday.

"He still has that level of influence," Senga said, but added that any attempt by Honasan would fail because of the alliance of the AFP's security to counter any such plot.

Among these officers is the division holding conducted with additional troops from Mindanao.

"We know that many of our colleagues in the military have already been enlightened," he said.

Senga visited Zamboanga in time for the anniversary celebration of the Southern Command.

He also went to Sulu and personally listened to the soldiers' sentiments.

But despite his confidence that any overthrow conspiracy involving the military would fail, Senga said the government continued to pursue coup plotters, including Honasan.

Senga said the police and military had fielded agents to track down and arrest the fugitive former senator.

He said that contrary to earlier reports, Honasan was not in Mindanao.

Reports had claimed that Honasan was sighted in certain parts of Mindanao and was being protected by military officers.

Jolly L. Alipala, PIA Zboanguena Rumus

PNP says most . . .

From page A1

In Malacañang, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said most of the killings were media-related, a charge other than the suppression of the freedom of the press.

"We wish we allay fears that these cases are in any way related to the issue of press freedom, which has not in the least been diminished in the Philippines," Bunye said in a statement.

He did not elaborate, but he was apparently referring to the failure of prosecutors to link the deaths of the journalists to their trade.

Bunye said the President had formed a special task force to address the issue.

"We believe the task force has been working competently to solve the other cases in cooperation with the victims' relatives and other media groups," he said.

Culture of impunity

The PNP released its statistics, which vary slightly from other government figures, to refute reports that a "culture of impunity" in the killing of Filipino journalists was in existence.

Earlier, the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontières (Reporters Without Borders) branded the Philippines as the second most dangerous country in the world for journalists after Iraq.

It expressed dismay at the lack of arrests, which it attributed to government tolerance of and indifference to the killings, and noted that most of the suspects were powerful politicians, and police and military personnel.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists also gave the same dubious recognition to the Philippines in 2005.

On Wednesday, US Sen. Richard Lugar (Republican), chair of the US Senate committee on foreign relations, told investigated cases of violence against the media, called on Mr. Arroyo to "thoroughly investigate and prosecute attacks on journalists."

But Bunye said, quoting PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao: "The PNP strongly denies reports on the alleged existence of a culture of impunity in the killing of journalists in the country, thus making the Philippines the second most dangerous place for media practitioners."

"Reports on the alleged existence of press freedom through media killings in the country are unfounded ... The police has been free on the trail of those responsible..."

'Instances'

Like Bunye, the PNP pointed out that according to its records, a number of reported media killings were not related to the victims' work as journalists.

Of the 40 recorded victims since 2001, police found that 32 were killed for their other activities.

There are "instances," the PNP said, where the victim was killed for getting involved in illegal drugs or illegal gambling, or where the victim was killed after being implicated in a robbery incident or in land disputes or extortion.

In one case, a journalist was killed for selling defective political or supermarket products, the PNP said.

Another incident involved a case of "child killing," according to the PNP.

In another case, the journalist was reportedly killed after having drinks with friends. In yet another case, the journalist was killed after being robbed inside a passenger bus.

The PNP, however, acknowledged an "obvious pattern" in the killings, noting that almost all of the murdered journalists were based in the provinces and worked in small media outfits.

'Window-dressing'

But Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. cautioned Malacañang against "window-dressing" its report on police action on the media murders.

He pressed the administration to be "transparent" and "truthful" about its steps to solve the killings, pointing out that rumors of the high-solution rate of such crimes had been belied by reports of media organizations.

"The continuing murder of newsmen is a blot on the new national leadership, ineffective government and corrupt law enforcement agencies," Pimentel said in a statement.

"President Arroyo has lost the moral compass needed to lead the nation. She must now resign so that a new election can follow," he said.

The senator pointed out that the conflicting reports of law enforcement authorities and the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines on the solution of the killings showed that the administration was now being "bamboozled down to handling of basic cases."

According to the NUJP, only three of the 41 cases of murder reported since Ms Arroyo became President in January 2001 had been solved.

Pimentel said the government's failure to solve the murders of media practitioners had fanned the flames of impunity.

"This unflattering tag has brought extreme shame to the Philippines before the international community, costing us dearly in terms of foreign investments, tourists and tourists," he said, referring to the statement of the Reporters Without Borders.

Free flow of info

Lugar stated the importance of the free flow of information in a democracy, which, he said, "depended on a press free to do its work without government intimidation.

In his statement, Bunye assured Lugar that the government administration had taken decisive action regarding the media murders.

"Efforts of the 30 cases cited by the senator have been solved and cases have been filed in courts to punish the perpetrators," Bunye said.

Malacañang apparently attributes to misinformation the US Senate's concern over the increasing number of journalist killings in the Philippines.

"President Arroyo has instructed the Department of Foreign Affairs to work closely with the law enforcement authorities and convey the proper brief on the matter to concerned parties," Bunye said.

Magna Carta

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada yesterday pressed his colleague, Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr., to start public hearings on the proposed Magna Carta for Journalists.

Estrada, who had filed a bill seeking the institutionalization of the system, said the time was ripe for the passage of such legislation "to protect practicing journalists."

"Journalists are the watchdogs of society whose duty is to expose corruption and abuses in the government and the private sector. It is the duty of Congress is to protect the guardians of truth," he said in a statement.

The Magna Carta proposed by Estrada seeks to provide multipurpose insurance benefits for media workers and to grant them tax exemption over benefits to their families.

Revilla chairs the committee on public information and mass media.

With a report from D'Angelou

Pacquiao in for new fight, throws hat into political ring

From page A3

Pacman's rebuttal to fight with Mexico's Oscar Larios in July Pacquiao has hinted that he may very well run for politics in next year's local election.

Contrary to rumors, the World Boxing Council super featherweight champion said he would not be running against City Mayor Pedro Atienza Jr.

Atienza is Pacquiao's close friend.

"Mayor Atienza will has one term. I respect him a lot so I will run in Manila first," he told reporters here on Wednesday.

Manila, which is in mostly Nacionalista territory, is the hometown of Pacquiao's wife, Jinky.

"I have been helping people. I want to serve and I want to serve more," the boxing champ said.

But when reporters pressed him to confirm his intention to run for mayor in Manila, Pacquiao smiled and said: "I am not yet decisive."

Bong Suyi, a close aide of Pacquiao, confirmed to the Inquirer that last April, the FB sports-ring idol went to the Comelec municipal Commission on Elections office to register as a voter in the area.

He said the boxing sensation also purchased a property in Diliman, which is more or less 90 kilometers from here.

Political observers here said Pacquiao could prove to be a strong contender with his money, popularity and charisma.

Suyi said it was incumbent Mayor Danny Martinez of Kiamba, his wife considered Pacquiao to run for mayor.

He said under the plan, Martinez, who is on his last term as chief executive, would be Pacquiao's running mate.

"It was mayor Martinez who planned the whole thing," Suyi said.

RP conquers leprosy but disease stigma remains, says WHO

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PHILIPPINES HAS CONquered leprosy but sadly, not the stigma of the disease.

Despite a low prevalence rate of only 0.49, the disease—patches of body loose people close it—remains a problem, according to Nobel Sandoura, the World Health Organization's goodwill ambassador for leprosy-elimination.

Persons with leprosy were probably even more saddled by social public perception than those with HIV/AIDS, Sandoura said.

"I [have you contract] leprosy, you're abandoned by your family and not allowed to relocate to your community even after you're cured," he said through an interpreter in a press conference marking the 100th anniversary of Culion Island, the country's foremost facility for leprosy.

Sandoura, president of Nippon Foundation, has devoted nearly of his time, traveling around the world assisting patients with leprosy and trying to remove misconceptions about the disease.

The global yardstick prescribed by the WHO for the elimination of leprosy is less than one for every 10,000 persons.

The 0.49 Philippine rate recorded by the WHO was achieved as early as 2000 and fully below the target.

The Department of Health figure of 0.38 two years ago was even more promising. That year, there were 2,120 cases detected and 3,145 patients cured.

From the medical point of view, leprosy is becoming a thing of the past. But the leprosies has an entirely different perspective.

"Leprosy has been eliminated but not the social stigma," Tony Nemenzo, director for International programs of the Sasakawa Memorial Health Foundation, told the Inquirer.

Sandoura complained that people still considered leprosy as hereditary, or some kind of "divine punishment," and highly communicable.

Although the disease was no longer communicable, he explained that the bacteria was one weak to be spread easily.

Militant youths protest treatment of RP boy in Canada

By Tarra V. Quismundo

SPOONS AND FORKS FROM THE DINING room found their way in the streets yesterday as they were lofted by a youth group protesting the "disciplining" of a young Filipino by school officials in Mississauga for using a spoon—instead of chopsticks—during lunch.

Instead of chopstick ban, some 20 members of militant group Akbayan Youth raised spoons and forks yesterday in a picket in front of the BIR Plaza on Ayala Avenue in Makati City where the Canadian Embassy maintains offices.

"We want Canadian authorities to sanction school officials for committing racial discrimination and disrespecting cultural diversity when they isolated a Filipino boy for using a spoon and fork," said the group's spokesperson, Jill Hernandez.

The Philippine Embassy in Canada recently reported that Maria Theresa Gallardo, the mother of a 7-year-old boy studying in Ontario, complained to a local school board that he had been repeatedly scolded by school officials for eating with a spoon, instead of a knife as they wanted him to, during meal times.

She was also reportedly told that if her son "acts like a pig," he had to sit in another table, BIR spokesperson Gilbert Remigio said, quoting from the report.

Philippine Ambassador to Canada Jose Brillantes, in a statement on Thursday, said the embassy was working with outraged Filipinos living in Mississauga to pursue the case.

"The embassy considers the alleged incident an affront to Filipino culture," Brillantes said.

Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines Peter Sutherland called it an "isolated incident" that shouldn't have blurred the... #Back on A7 report.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, May 6, 2006
3rd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 9:31-42
Gospel: John 6:60-69

Many of Jesus' followers said, "This language is very hard! Who can accept it?"

Jesus was aware that his disciples were murmuring [about] his motive and said to them, "Does this offend you? Then how will you react when you see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. But among you there are some who do not believe."

From the beginning Jesus knew who would betray him. He he added, "As I have told you, no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father."

After this many disciples withdrew and no longer followed him. Jesus asked the Twelve, "Will you also go away?" Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We now believe and know that you are the holy One of God."

Commentary

The Church is at peace! Here is making progress, prospering and doubling. Edified in the fear, one of the believers who makes progress, that is hope, and how this Jesus says to her: "Rebeka, stand up!" And she opens her eyes and stands up. How benign is the evidence to show that she is alive and many come to believe upon hearing the story. Dorcas is delight in the body and blood, and the disciples find it hard to believe. Many drift and benefit away from Jesus because they cannot believe in the eucharist. And we—do we believe what the Body and Blood of Christ gives us life? It is life that is meant to be shared and given for the sake of others.

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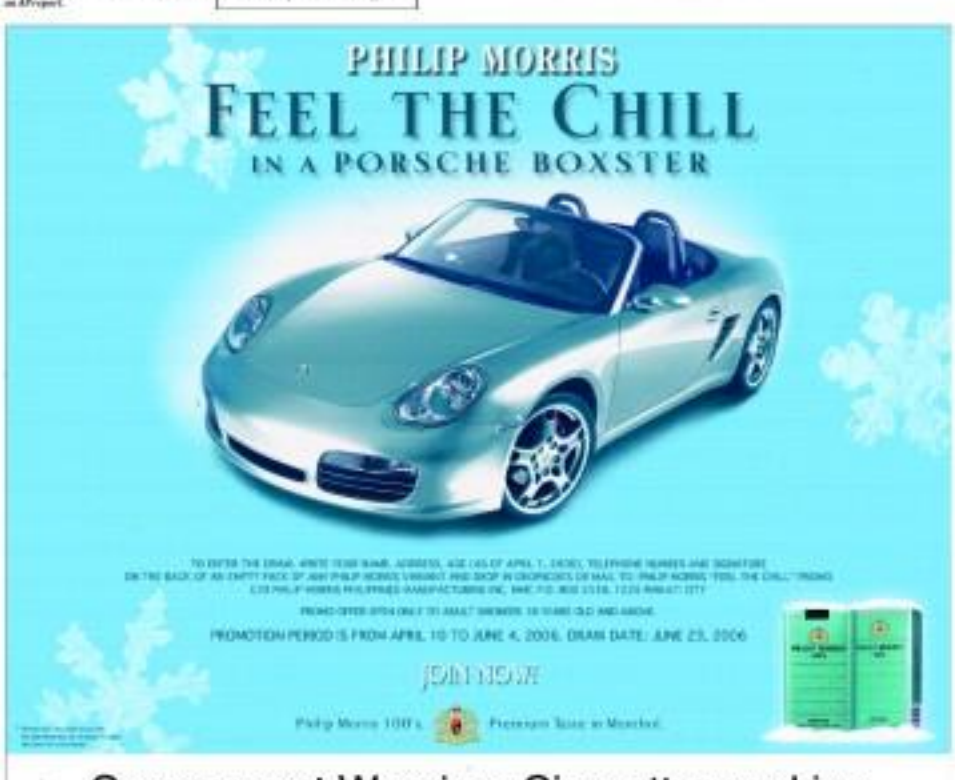

Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health

Aragoncillo admits spying for GMA foes

ARAGONCILLO, shown here in an undated file photo, has pleaded guilty to four counts of espionage.

From page A1

from Aragoncillo but said they did not deal with confidential matters.

Aragoncillo's public defender, Eleanor M. Kelley, said his client never intended to harm the United States and never received any money for his efforts.

"It was his sole intention to help the people of the Philippines," Kelley said.

Jail instead of death

The most serious charge, conspiracy to transmit national defense information, can carry the death penalty. But under a plea agreement, Aragoncillo faces 15 to 20 years in prison. Sentencing was scheduled for Aug. 14.

US Attorney Christopher J. Christie said outside court that the government did not seek the death penalty because no physical harm resulted from the leaked information.

However, Christie said: "It was information that had the potential to compromise US national security."

Aragoncillo, an ex-Marine and former FBI intelligence analyst, worked as a military aide to Vice Presidents Al Gore and Dick Cheney starting in 1999. After retiring from the Marines, he became a civilian employee of the FBI, working at Fort Monmouth in central New Jersey.

Extradita denial

He was arrested in September, along with Michael Jay Aquino, a former Philippine police official who is accused of passing information from Aragoncillo about Philippine leaders to current and former political officials in the Philippines.

Extradita last week denied suggestions by US prosecutors that he conspired with Aragoncillo to overthrow Ms Arroyo.

Aquino, a Filipino living in New York, pleaded not guilty in October to an indictment charging him with conspiracy and acting as an unregistered foreign agent. His lawyer, Mark A. Bertram, said Aquino did not know that the material he received from Aragoncillo was classified.

By e-mail, fax and phone

Under questioning by Assistant US Attorney Karl H. Buch, Aragoncillo admitted asking dozens of documents from White House and FBI computers and passing them by hand, e-mail, fax and telephone.

One question asked if he knew that a document he took in February 2005 from an FBI computer contained "national defense information relating to terrorist threats to US military personnel in the Philippines."

At first all the questions, Aragoncillo answered, "Yes, sir."

Meeting at Malacañang

He admitted in court to passing on documents classified as top secret, secret and confidential that included information relating to terrorist threats against US government interests and military personnel in the Philippines.

The US Department of Justice said Aragoncillo also admitted he met the alleged co-conspirators at the Malacañang Palace in January 2001.

Prosecutors called his guilty admission a "plea agreement" but refused to say if he would testify against co-defendant Ayalero.

The case has caused a political sensation in the Philippines because the stolen documents allegedly were used by opponents of Ms Arroyo to try to oust her.

Four counts

Prosecutors named Extradita, Lacson and Pascandella as unindicted co-conspirators in the plot.

Aragoncillo "took an oath to protect his country [as a Marine] and instead decided to betray his country," said Ostorie. "He took information that was very sensitive to our national security."

Aragoncillo pleaded guilty to four counts.

One charged him with conspiracy to transmit national defense information, the second with transmitting national defense information.

The third charge was unlawful retention of said defense information and the fourth unlawful use of a government computer.

Aragoncillo would face the death penalty if it was found the information he gave led to the death of an intelligence source. The justice department said that was "not present" in Aragoncillo's case.

A department statement said Aragoncillo admitted that his espionage activity continued during his time as an FBI analyst.

"Aragoncillo admitted that he regularly transferred to his Philippine contacts national security documents classified as 'Secret,' and that the information could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of a foreign nation," the statement said.

The information was allegedly leaked between October 2000 and February 2002.

"His betrayal is profound and a disservice to his country," Christie said.

The White House had no comment on Aragoncillo.

AP Reuters Agence France-Presse

Erap et al. could face rebellion raps—DOJ

From page A1

"We will file rebellion charges against them if we can make a linkage between the admission [of Aragoncillo] and the plot to oust the President from office," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez disagreed with a statement by Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor that politicians linked to the Aragoncillo case could be charged with treason, pointing out that treason "is a war crime."

He said that Estrada, Lacson and the others were "in trouble" if Aragoncillo indeed implicated them in the espionage operation.

He said that if those named by Aragoncillo were eventually indicted in the United States, it would be logical for the US authorities to seek their extradition.

Won't oppose extradition

"We will not object to their extradition. We have to honor the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty," he said. "But those people can certainly resist by resorting to legal process by asking for evidence."

Defensor said it was important for the government to obtain documentary and other evidence used in the Aragoncillo case in the United States that would show conspiracy with politicians in the Philippines.

He said the government would await the final resolution of the Aragoncillo case before taking legal action against the conspirators.

"The objective of getting such documents and evidence was to find out what were the plans of the conspirators and where they intended to get power, he said.

US notices

Last February, the US Embassy in Manila, through the Department of Justice, notified former President Estrada and his son, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, Lacson, "JV" Ejercito, that the US government had tapped their telephones, monitored their electronic communication during its investigation of Aragoncillo.

The legal notices served on the Estradas stated that the US government intercepted their wire and/or electronic communications between Aug. 22 and Sept. 12, 2005.

Lacson also got a legal notice from the US government but December but Lacson said he was just informed that his e-mail account had been found in a laptop seized from Aquino.

Estrada, in a phone talk with the reporters, said that information that came from Aragoncillo's wife was delivered to him by a common friend and stressed he did not ask for it.

Others got same info

He said the same information reached other politicians, including Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, Executive Secretary Angelo Reyes, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel.

Estrada said he met Aragoncillo during an official trip to the United States and they became friends.

"I have never received secret or classified information there. There was nothing there that others didn't know," Estrada said in Filipino.

Mayor Ejercito said he saw no reason to worry about Aragoncillo pleading guilty of passing classified information to politicians in the Philippines.

No control

"We never just recipients of e-mails. People can send me e-mails anytime. I cannot control that," Ejercito said.

He said the information revealed to him "could not even be considered classified" and that it was "the same information we get from newspapers."

He said he was prepared for the administration using the issue against him and his family.

"The administration grabs every opportunity. They will always blame us [for all their problems]," Ejercito said.

"I feel sorry for Atty [Aragoncillo]. His biggest crime is he still had concern for this country. He still loves this country," Ejercito added.

Is US spying?

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero cautioned the administration against filing rebellion charges against opposition members linked to the Aragoncillo case.

Escudero said charging those named by prosecutors as coplotters in the case if they actually received classified information from Aragoncillo and that this was damaging to the government.

He also said he would also imply that the US government was digging up dirt against the Senate opposition leaders, he added.

"It does not follow logic unless the US is planning against our government. Are the Americans also plotting with the opposition to oust the government?" he added.

With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Norman T. Flores, Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Philip C. Tubeza and TJ Burgonio

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

GMA to drop by Macau for wedding on way to Saudi

By GIC. Cabanegan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-AR-royo will make a surprise visit today to Asia's casino capital, Macau, before flying off commercial to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for a four-day state visit.

The Chamber is a principal sponsor at the wedding of Trade and Industry Undersecretary Cotton Vera Cruz and businessman Ajax Evangelista to be held this afternoon.

Cruz is the daughter of Gina Vera Perez de Tavarez from her first marriage with construction magnate Philip Cruz. Evangelista is the owner of Toshiba-Skelled Equipment among other firms.

The President also attended the couple's civil wedding in Manila recently.

Her Gentleman Aide Miguel Arroyo will accompany the President in her trips to Macau and Saudi Arabia.

The President is set to visit Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam to discuss the resulting of situation with Saudi officials and seek the kingdom's support for the Philippines' bid to obtain an observer status in the Organization of Islamic Conference.

The President will hold talks with Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud which are expected to lead to the expansion of trade and energy cooperation between the two countries.

As customary during her trips abroad, Ms Arroyo will also touch base with the Filipino community in Saudi.

Included in the President's delegation are Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Rep. Alipio "Ado" Badelles, Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon Jr., Lanao del Norte Rep. Abdullah Dimaporo, Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, Malacañang Gov. Eddy Befurquin and special envoy to Saudi Arabia Antonio Villamor.

MUSI STRATUS STATE UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Gonzalez admits SC rulings clipped GMA powers

By Armand N. Nocum

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ admitted yesterday that the decision of the Supreme Court on the three controversial orders of the President effectively clipped the powers of the latter to declare a state of national emergency—the President's power to take over vital industries had been rendered "inutile."

"It definitely affected [the Arroyo power] to the point that it might become inutile," Gonzalez said of the court's ruling on Section 17, Article III of the Constitution, which grants the President the power to take over public utilities.

"If you follow the Supreme Court ruling, the President must always ask Congress for emergency powers. But the question is how fast or how slow can Congress act," he said.

He said the government now would definitely file a motion for reconsideration and would ask the court to reverse its ruling.

Gonzalez also denied that the government had lost three cases. He claimed that the court's ruling on Executive Order 464—which stopped Cabinet men from attending congressional hearings without the President's say so—"was a draw." The Palace also "won 100 percent" in the case of the calibrated preemptive response (CPR) policy, which the court declared as partly constitutional.

That, he said it would be unfair for people to call for the resignation or expect apologies from Cabinet men who had advised the President on the three measures.

"I don't think we failed the President," Gonzalez said, adding that the decision on the three orders was reached by the Cabinet as a whole, with the President giving the final imprimatur.

But in view of the court's decisions, he said the Palace is looking into the decisions to guide it in its future actions.

"Habitually, in studying the implications of these lessons at the end of the day, you have to follow the decisions of the Supreme Court," Gonzalez said.

GONZALEZ: We will appeal decision

2008 DEADLINE

DAR fasttracks distribution of 600,000 has. under CARP

By Blanche S. Rivera

WITH BARELY TWO YEARS TO GO BEFORE the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program expires in 2008, the Department of Agrarian Reform has ordered its field officers nationwide to fasttrack the distribution of the remaining 600,000 hectares of lands identified for CARP coverage.

In a memorandum issued to regional directors and provincial agrarian reform officers (PARO) on April 21, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Narciso Nieto, it has ordered the issuance of notices of coverage (NOC) on these lands.

"Since you have already verified that certain landholdings are coverable under CARP pursuant with the issuance of NOC covering all lands, regardless of whether or not they are actually tilled by the owner next year's target," Nieto said.

Nieto said all private landholdings that have been validated as "coverable" under CARP would be issued NOC now if the government can only start actual coverage of the lands after 2006.

The issuance of the NOC signals the beginning of the official land acquisition and distribution process, according to the DAR.

Nieto, DAR field operations chief, also ordered the regional and provincial officers to formally inform the concerned Regions of Deeds of the NOC to bar any other transactions or annotations on the landholdings' titles.

The DAR has acquired and distributed some 5.8 million hectares of the target 4.3 million hectares of private landholdings identified for CARP.

Between 400,000 to 600,000 hectares are left for distribution by 2008. This year, the target for coverage is 150,000, according to Nieto.

The DAR, however, requires strong evidence from the owners of the remaining landholdings, which are considered to be the most problematic.

These lands are located mostly in Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, Quezon and Camarines Sur. Landowners in these provinces have asked the courts to either defer or exempt their lands from CARP coverage.

Parents assail GMA for breaking vow

HEADWORDED CLASHfathers of football personnel Sen. Rodolfo Biazon Jr. (PP) lashed out at President Macapagal-Arroyo for breaking a campaign promise to help them.

Philip Ytoza, president of the Parents Association Fighting Patents Coalition (PAF Coalition) said Arroyo might have been referring to "lip service" to over 1 million affected students when she promised in closet P1 billion from the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) to help victims of ballot pre-paid scholarship plans.

He said some 150,000 students and shareholders will not be able to enroll in June if the problem of the pre-need industry is not solved.

In a televised roundtable discussion, Mr. Arroyo said "legal issues" had prevented the Palace from using GSIS money to help plan holders.

Last year, the President promised to allocate P1 billion to state universities and colleges so they could accommodate students with failed educational plans.

But UDD presidential Winston Garcia said government rules did not allow the transfer of GSIS funds to any institution without the consent of Congress, Abraham Paper

8-day candlelight vigil vs Cha-cha begins today

MEMBERS OF A CITbased group will start tonight an eight-day candlelight vigil outside their homes to show opposition to Charter change and to press for electoral reforms.

Those on the road are asked to turn on their car blinkers from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., according to the National Action for Peaceful Removal and Stability (Impact).

The vigil ends on May 13 with a "Resolution Candlelight Orchestra" assembly at the Quezon Memorial Circle from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Participants are requested to come in white and bring candles, candles or other objects suitable to their faith and teachings.

Impact is an interfaith coalition made up of the Kapatiran sa Nagkakaisang Kabuhayan, the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Your personal handbook required and recommended reading in 1987 (Malacañang Directory)

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Public interest

Editorial

WHERE THERE IS A CONFLICT BETWEEN PUBLIC interest and private need, there should be no question as to which must prevail. But obviously, even to a congressman like Edcel Lagman of Albay, this basic principle of public governance is rare cheer. He insists that a 58-hectare housing project located inside the 2,700-hectare La Mesa watershed should be allowed to proceed for the benefit of 1,401 employees of the National Waterworks and Sewerage Administration (Nawasa)—now the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS)—and their families.

The families were awarded the rights to the land in 1960 as part of a collective bargaining agreement. However, the present location of the project is not the original one. The CBA-designated site was in San Jose, Bulacan, outside the La Mesa watershed. But the implementation of the project was delayed because succeeding Nawasa and MWSS administrations, concerned with the project's possible adverse impact on Metro Manila's water supply, contested the validity of the agreement. On Jan. 17, 1975, the Supreme Court ruled that "there was absolutely nothing which remained to be done except the execution of the sale."

The following year, President Ferdinand Marcos ordered that the original site be used for a new Tondoton plans. Thus the housing project was transferred to La Mesa. "The deal ... was consummated with the turnover of the absolute deed of sale to the claimants in March 2006," noted Save the La Mesa Dam Coalition, which is opposing the project, not "per se" but only its location. A proposal to relocate the project was said to have been rejected by the awardees.

If the project is carried out in its present site, not only will it destroy a substantial portion of the La Mesa Forest, it will also compromise the safety of the drinking water of the National Capital Region and, therefore, the health of its 12 million residents, those opposing the project warn.

But Lagman is adamant, which looks rather strange. He is reportedly giving the awardees free legal advice, but the project is not even in his district in Albay. He has assured the public that "engineering mitigating measures" would be installed "to foreclose possible pollution of the La Mesa Dam and prevent the despoliation of the area." But we didn't know that pollution-control is one of his fields of expertise.

On the other hand, a 2004 study, conducted by the US-based National Hydraulic Research Center, concluded: "There was no mitigating measure we could recommend for the possible spill of toxic materials into the reservoir." The study recommended: "It will be in the best interest of the MWSS and the greatest public, who will eventually utilize the water in the La Mesa Reservoir for drinking, that the 58 hectares remain a protected watershed and not be converted to a housing project."

On TV, Lagman has been invoking the 1075 decision of the high court. In other forums, he has appealed to the public's humanitarian instincts. "Many of the awardees are now in their while others have passed away," he said.

But in the high court's decision cast in stone so that it can never be reworked? Benigno Kalaboan operations manager John Paul Balayon points out that there's a nuance in law that says that "where the circumstances in which a judgment was made have drastically changed by the time that judgment is to be implemented, that prior decision can at least be revisited or at least totally challenged."

Retired Justice Ramon Mabutas of the Court of Appeals has opined that the "prevention of harm to the public, which such a takeover (of the housing project) seeks to accomplish, is as valid a reason as any" for the state to exercise the power of eminent domain.

In environmentalists' valid reason to compromise the health and welfare of 12 million Filipinos in favor of 1,401 families? Do the benefits that will accrue to the families justify the risk to the entire Metro Manila populace?

Happily, the awardees seem to be open to the idea of moving the project to a safer site. If true, they are more sensible than their legal adviser. The awardees, notwithstanding Lagman's advice, apparently appreciate the principle that the public interest should be put above private need.

Divided loyalty

Separate Opinion

Sedfrey A. Cruz

RAUL J. PALABRICA, FORMER FISCHER'S AS-sistant of this paper and now a member of the Immigration and Deportation Commission, wrote me recently to concur with the views I expressed on Dual Allegiance in this column last April 25. (he had earlier criticized the bill that became Rep. Act No. 9225, which grants, under certain conditions, dual citizenship to natural-born Filipinos who have been or may be naturalized in other countries.

He complained: "Many Filipino Americans reacted strongly to my position that the bill championed Filipino citizenship and that the erstwhile Filipinos who went to get the new citizenship they voluntarily abandoned do so simply to take advantage of its benefits without having to give something in return for that privilege.

"The much vaunted entry of massive investments from expatriate Filipinos who demand all the protections and rights of citizenship before they bring in their money has not materialized. I doubt it will ever come at all. There goes another useless law."

Well said, *compañero*! I completely agree.

My good friend, former Commissioner Ilas Salonga (C. Fernandez Jr. of the Commission on Audit), also has similar misgivings. Says that Rep. 9225: "In sum my two articles from his students in the UP College of Law whom he had required to study and comment on the law. Most of them thought it was unconstitutional. One of them quoted Justice Sabino Padilla, who had written in San Beda vs. Secretary of Labor, 79 Phil. 237:

"Dual nationality is universally recognized as an undesirable phenomenon. It inevitably results in questionable loyalties and leads to international conflicts. Dual nationality also makes possible the sale of citizenship as a badge of convenience to undeserving individuals. And it impairs the sinpleness of communion which is the hallmark of citizenship and allegiance. A person should have the right to choose his own nationality and this choice should be honored by all countries. However, he should not be entitled to claim more than one nationality."

Congress did not think so when it passed the bill that became the Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act of 2003. Its sponsors had rejected the arguments that it would violate the constitutional policy against dual allegiance, saying that it was different from the old citizenship, which was perfectly lawful. President Macapagal-Arroyo agreed when she signed the measure into law and the Supreme Court later concurred.

In Mercado vs. Manzano, 307 SCRA 630, the petitioner challenged the respondent's title as vice mayor of Makati City, claiming that as a Filipino American he was covered by Sec. 40 of the local Government Code disqualifying dual citizens from local elective offices.

The Supreme Court answered to the debates in the Constitutional Commission of 1987 on the distinction between dual citizenship and dual allegiance. It reminded that former said to-called dual lawyers. It held that Manzano could not be guilty of dual allegiance because he had effectively renounced his dual nationality in his certificate of candidacy for the disputed office. In other words, he had become exclusively a Filipino citizen.

The decision did not unexpectedly say that dual citizenship necessarily imports dual allegiance, which Rep. Act No. 9225 impliedly allows and in fact even encourages although it "is inimical to the national interest" according to Sec. 2(b) Sec. 5 of the Constitution.

A citizen owes exclusive loyalty to his country but not under this dubious law which allows a natural-born Filipino to renounce or renounce his Philippine citizenship while the remaining he keeps it in the country where he has been naturalized. Not a dual citizen, he is allowed to divide his loyalty between the country of his birth and the country of his choice.

This is the inexcusable infidelity that all the service or major departments of the government—Malacañang, Congress and the Supreme Court—have expressly recognized and knowingly condoned. They have all categorically affirmed that a dual citizen may owe part of his loyalty to his adopted country instead of offering his total and exclusive allegiance to the Philippines.

As the late Justice Fernando said, "I cannot for the life of me understand why Congress passed RA 9225 despite the constitutional ban against dual allegiance." It turns out now that the law is "inimical to the national interest" and should be dealt with accordingly: i.e., shun and struck down as unconstitutional.

Let me repeat what I said in this column against "the hedging sentimentality of Congress in allowing Filipinos to retain or reacquire their natural-born citizenship after purposely and knowingly abandoning it. What it means is that we patriotically pretend there at the same time to continue their allegiance to their adopted foreign country and thus dilute their loyalty to their homeland but forgiving Philippines."

Rep. Act No. 9225 beliefies patriotism and "reduces it to an idiots accommodation. It compromises the sanctity of conscience which must be a single and undivided devotion, with mercenal convenience in another land.

A run of good luck

Get Real

Solita Collas-Monsod

"THERE IS AN OLD IMPRESSION THAT BAD luck comes in threes. This notion also applies to good luck, and the current run of decisions from the Supreme Court not only validates, but extends it. We are talking about four of them (three electronic and one shell-history resolutions), and counting.

The three Supreme Court decisions—on SG 464, SPMD and CPR, and PP 1017—should be read to be appreciated, and thanks to the IT revolution, one can access them on the Internet and, hence, need not provide more than a short cut to just reading the dispositive portions of the decisions instead of all 161 pages, but one has the full flavor of the arguments pro and con, and the reasoning that led to the decisions.

The opposing sides in all three cases claimed victory, and both would have basis for their claims. In the SG 464 case (the executive orders issued after National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, who has Cabinet rank, was ordered detained by the Senate for not answering questions and allegedly treating the witness with disrespect and contempt), the Court unanimously declared EO 464 (Section 2a) void. Section 2b of the three sections under were valid, but Section 2b and Section 3 were void. In other words, the executive branch can await congressional requests for information (subject to exemptions), but it can only do so after "clearly asserting the right to do so and/or proffering its reasons therefor" (victory for Congress). Shades of Solomon.

In the SPBSU (Public Assembly Act of 1985) "Enjoining the Free Exercise by the People of Their Right Peaceably to Assemble and Petition the Government ..." (CPR) case, the Court declared that EPPRDN is constitutional (victory for executive), and that EO 12 and EO 19, issued purport to define licenses in lieu of institutions who sue" is null and void (victory for the petitioners). Furthermore, the Court chastised the executive branch ...not just the present admin-

istration, but all those starting from 1985—for not implementing Section 23 that requires the designation of at least one suitable freedom park or plaza in every city and municipality of the country. It ordered the interior secretary to do so within 30 days, after which "no prior permit shall be required to exercise the right to peaceably assemble and petition in the public parks or plazas of a city or municipality that has not yet complied with it."

The other side of the coin, however, is that complying with that provision also provides local government executives with the justification to refuse to allow demonstrations to take place where public convenience and safety might be compromised (e.g., traffic disruptions) because of the location parks provide an alternative location. More checks and balances.

The same balancing act was performed by the Court in deciding on Presidential Proclamation 1017 and General Order 5. Some parts of both were considered unconstitutional (victory for the executive), as in PP 1017, the calling out power of the President or the AFP to prevent or suppress lawless violence, the declaration of national emergency, and in GO 5, the provision of a standard by which the AFP and the PNP should implement PP 1017, i.e., whatever necessary and appropriate actions and measures to suppress and prevent acts of lawless violence. Other parts were declared unconstitutional (victory for the petitioners): the takeover of privately-owned utilities or business interests without prior legislation under the national emergency declaration; the portion of GO 5 which deals with "acts of terrorism" as these have not yet been defined; restrictions at issue without proof that the arrested were committing acts constituting lawless violence; and the imposition of standards or prior restraint on the media. In other words, PP 1017 doesn't give unbridled to the authorities. Only one justice dissented: Dante Tinga.

Why can't these three decisions be considered "good luck" for us? Two important reasons: One, the Court has shown its independence of the Court, belying any suspicion that it is a presidential rubber stamp, packed as it were by her appointees (two of the three ponentes are her appointees). Second is that they also make nonsense of the claims that there is a state of "undeclared" martial law, or that what the country is undergoing under the present circumstances is anywhere near it.

The fourth "good luck" sign? Two weeks ago, this column discussed a March 28 high court resolution, which area not encouraging. Sally likened to a "mountain that labored and brought forth a mouse." Not so, after all. Responding to a motion for clarification, the Court clarified that the resolution must be read in conjunction with the Constitution, the law and decided cases. And doing so shows that if a movie was produced, it is one that runs. To make a long story short, that seemingly innocuous resolution actually means that the Office of the Ombudsman has until until June 30 of this year to make up its mind about whether or not culpability of the Commission on Elections in the computerization case. If it so finds, then at least report in the Court every three months on the status of the prosecution of such crimes and one up to its final disposition. No mistake that the Ombudsman has come out with newspaper ads defending itself.

It's about time the Filipino people got some really good news. God and the Supreme Court willing, the run of "luck" will continue.

Where are the poor?

COMMENTARY

Dennis Murphy

MANY HAVE NOTICED THE POOR ARE NOT mentioning the current political discussions and rallies. This is not good, they believe, because without the poor the rallies are trivial.

But why are the poor absent? Some civil society leaders say the poor have been so be exhausted by elections and tired of the issues and then they'll vote. "A different day, another issue" some leaders complain by different priorities, or have lost faith in all the system leaders.

In an attempt to find the beginnings of an answer, I invited the last urban poor people's workshop participants to a meeting in Quezon City's Tandang Sora barangay conference room to discuss the question.

"What do you think the government to do?" I asked.

"Give us jobs so we can eat."

This idea, it seems, is not a conspiracy of the poor. The Philippines' reasons for jobs and food dominate the lives like the blazing sun dominates our summer days.

"Does God want people to die hungry?" I asked.

"No, it's the bad leaders who are corrupt and steal, not God. He believes in food. It's God food to us."

In many the poor see it as their duty to call answers this way. They know more about God's ways than they do of Da-da-da.

They had, however, their problems; that they no leaves still than they would be in their home provinces in food and home. "There," Lito explained, "it was don't have money or fish, you do not eat. We can eat dinner with you, because we are in a poor. In Manila, you can become sad you can't eat enough."

"Are you hopeless today?"

"Medyo sa umaga," Melanie says.

"Medyo na umaga." Less into with exercise.

I think that if I can understand this attitude to the face of the poverty I can understand the poor.

I have noted Malcolm Gunaratne, 20, single and unemployed. She lives her job as a security guard. She lives by herself. "I borrow loans my friends to buy food. They will I can, look at me, I used to be muscle. Now I'm so thin. I look at me." She holds up her arm, which is as thin as a child's.

"What do you want our government to do?" I asked.

"He want GMA out. Pilvir Gampay!"

Antonia Bolasa, an older woman, who has lived in Manila, says her husband doesn't work, but they have two sons working scholarship. "We're lucky I guess, listening to the other people here in Payatas. You can sometimes and more once a month."

The women and the community organizers who work in their areas say the women I interviewed are typical of very many, maybe half of all the residents of Payatas. Other women I met in other urban poor who know the issues and care about Gloria Arroyo are the exception. The generous point, if not exactly as poor as the women interviewed, are concerned with jobs and food. Even food problems other people have, it seems there is an air of tension. Our well-being doesn't

It's not poor people alone. Later in the day, on Radio Veritas, I heard Jesuit Mario Orbos of the Alliance of Progressive Labor say almost the same thing about workers. Their problems, he answered in jobs and their rights, are in Gloria.

It is not a solution to say the poor or the workers are ignorant and need education about Gloria or camp interests. It seems unfair, as can for some reason their problems are solved, they have totally different questions and need help from experiencing their own priority goals. They will, they only need rallies for food and jobs. If such rallies had come to pass, perhaps Gloria would have voted.

"The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty" (Lk 2:53).

Dennis Murphy works with the Urban Poor Associates.

The summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro

HIGH BLOOD

Nelson D. Loyola

RED also like to mean the summit of the accomplishing and above what makes their blood pressure the strongest then at back, concept that all's well with their world and with themselves. —Ed.

some personal story. Other things could be aimed to some more pursues for to months that I can't be certain of. Maybe it's the altitude.

He said the first night in camp after I was exposed the dream technicolorized red.

The second day was the back ingenuous slowly was taking. We were seeing unbelievable sites, wild animals, and the beauty of the land. We also saw other trekkers. Mt. Kilimanjaro remained clean, more rugged, majestic. He spent the second night in camp where we prepared dinner at noon to good food.

Shortly after waking early at dawn, on the third day, we ate my breakfast slowly and the sun poured over Kenya. The ascent still seemed gradual, but we felt only a panorama of desert like landscape. I never saw Bundy's Kilimanjaro. Now I know why. I must admit a declaration called Kenyatta. He was now traveling on boots, more graphic and glorious.

Mt. body began to ache. We called the Tanzanian mountain guides "pole pole." The good ambassador merely smiled. He knew there was no way we could go too fast. Lemons saved me.

It was almost dark when we reached the camp at the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro. We felt that we almost reached the summit. We had a total of 42 kilometers of the most peak of 6,000 m of Africa, reputed to be much higher than Carnegie's last of the mountain tops which I conceived at the late 1980s while on assignment in Tanzania. Some more gone after much more summit would bring me to the summit of Kilimanjaro.

The Tanzanian ambassador told us that we would make the final ascent at midnight. Otherwise, going up, we would not see to the base of the Uhuru Peak, and in the distant hell on the water of the ascent.

My whole body now was all in pain. But I was more worried that I might suffer a heart attack. I felt my heart was pounding over my bosom—in fact the loudest time I was loud. I wanted to hear me to relieve myself before dinner. Nothing going. The direct coldness of the night, as many degrees below zero, put blood into clothes, and dinner no more cooked.

At 12 midnight, we, together with one or two other groups, proceeded to the ultimate climb. The night or necessary seemed clear enough sun and light above the stars. The guides told us that we would never brightly. But I thought I did not mind anybody or anything else anymore—except my climbing pick and my heart whose pounding threatened to burst or break my chest.

At every step up, I could feel that I needed to take a little bit down, the base it was no exception, for months it was because the area up was made of sand or pumice that I was fatigued and thought that I would never reach the top.

Three hours later, I knew I had emerged at the summit. In child's make up? It almost analgesic at the ascent. I told our Tanzanian coordinator that I had to go down. He assured me it's polite to accompany me. The others turning their backs away from here and glory. Our Asian ambassador whispered to me that he would compose his sacred attempt to conquer Kilimanjaro, his utmost goal in life. I felt the same back and very much alive, but not a rose bit.

I vowed to the Tanzanian ambassador that I would definitely return to the base camp the following year, and make a final climb to the summit. I suppose he was used to people saying this as he gave me a certificate proving I either the end of that year.

Five years later, after my retirement, I was enjoying another adventure of a lifetime. I was swimming up with a whale shark in the Sea of Cebu, south of the cheap, the friendship, together with our daughter and son-in-law in Dumaguete.

Nelson D. Loyola is a retired ambassador.

Flavors of life

THE SEE WAS ONCE AGAIN STOPPED. EIGHT AND TWO caught of vehicles trying to their destinations regardless of volunteers, or volunteers, need, in the area. The attendants' attempt have appeared everyone's impatience and it seemed. Even were slammed on fears to the bus drivers called or shipping passengers in their's up.

Barely had I jumped off, when she has jerked forward and

Young Blood

Lourdes E. Fortes

We want to know what the young are thinking about. Tell us your thoughts on current issues! We welcome contributions from the Inquirer Young Blood section. —Ed.

But more was the club blood game of which my friends and I were undisputed champion. The contest took most of our opponents, no matter how long, could not make it to the finish line. Only a few of us, the best of the best, were always out there for the quick kill. Mad I took to class instead of those in the other teams, things would have ended differently, such as me ending up with some broken bones or, worse, under a gravestone. No Filipino drivers, people are not people, regardless of whether they are motorists or the pedestrian lane, people are just obstacles standing to their way.

And are a big part of an extreme sentimental—and even loud so—canvassing. Maybe I've inhaled too much smoke and gasoline.

Commuting is pure sexuality, and finally learning to drive still sexuality for little. Imagine: We must sidestep vehicles to get to a safe one, no more arguing with the driver about the correct change, no more risk of sophistication whenever personal fortunes arrange that could very well be hindered by opposite cars. Just be sure to avoid the jeepney driver Cancel, dash from one gray mandarin's old blind—and not me.

On my windows, I'd see only myself and the road ahead. If I drive a car, I would have to have the heater even from before an appointment. I won't have to fuck over a big chunk of my allowance for the cab ride home when darkness deepens. I won't have to be in the middle of the side of the road where most riders follow flow cars—the tainted handmade of their doors, the awkward smells to me.

Learning to drive is no exciting, even romantic rite of passage. Pilipinos usually learn to drive they are 18, use as their new skills to begin another promising chapter of their lives, which is college.

But long after you steer from the normal road to drivers lessons and bring you into a new one that you will never lose, it is the things you have to come learn. But if regardless the dusty yet idyllic town, commuting does the job as well.

Commuting is also some of one's survival skills. In school, I was taught to always wear to face, to consider every cop in an older person with "po" or "opo." Being on your best behavior in all times distinguished you from the less polite whose every move dark from speeding cars much time under the sun.

But inside public transportation, poise means nothing. You can stay in line for as long as you wish. Jump your hands to yourself and watch carefully as the jeepney rolls away, crammed with passengers who elbowed their way to a comfortable seat.

His moment of "yes," or your "please" will come when the driver is to give you the correct change, but an explosive defensive will.

Like jeepneys, I drive find myself elbows to elbows, rewarding for a minimum, with the very people you once swore those child not alone. There's the guy of college age who is pretending to be still going to school, using a war in his mouth to by guts off the jeepney to go to the mall across the street in time on the morning. There's the old woman who cannot with her bags spread again to hold the fumbles of about the other to avoid the bumps of the road, and there's the old man who, even are softened pack, he has like aged bodies and dark hearts he can.

But there were others who to use a smile. Like the 2 year old girl staring on her mother's lap and tugging, "Ma, bingo, bingo." And the old man who, with his wife, was trying to get into a movie and I drive joining their guide with questions about the scenery. There's the gallant old man hanging on to the back of the jeepney after giving up his seat to a young woman. While the other to give up his last, he smiles and says, "Thank you, but I'm already paid, miss."

In the 40 minutes a ride to where one is going, one becomes a session or class of different lives. It's an experience that can be done long or more, but is more often disappearing. One is confronted with unlimited stories of sadness, despair and fear and the is the reason learning to drive is unavailable for many.

It is a car, who will I see but myself, or my passenger who will certainly be a long-time friend to a relative I've known my entire life? After the freedom means stop-coasting, it is the strange route of south about back deep—but will take over. All rushes from my passengers, my fellow jeepney passengers, and how they made their greetings in their stomach leaders. A wide-eyed little boy, looking over his mother to be no separated between adults, with a heavy school bag on his lap, is a sight, both about breaking and admirable.

What is interesting, I observed, suspicion of life that I would have thought to be be-ought of license had I gotten my whole life looking at the world's beauty that reminded that one has and sometimes means the one does, rumored laughter and heavy sighs of real people. A solitary jeepney is all that I need to bring me to wherever I want. It is inside this vehicle where I was touched by hates that are literal or fleeting and kinds that are done or petty. It is the only place where stress, can, fears and spicy blend to offer the real flavor of life.

Lourdes E. Fortes, 24, graduated from the Ateneo de Manila University with a degree in creative writing. She is doing graduate studies at the University of the Philippines.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

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EVAT unfair to senior citizens

THE ENHANCED VALUE-ADDED TAX, which was recently increased to 12 percent, is unfair to senior citizens. It takes back 40 percent of the legally mandated 20 percent discount on food and services given to senior citizens, thus leaving only 8 percent of the discount, which is published up by the service charge.

Since many establishments will refuse to grant the discount due mainly to the mistaken belief that it eats into their profits, the poor senior citizens ends up paying 12 percent more for food or service that he/she avails himself/herself of. Ignored, forsaken, sick and still his/her low pension hardly enough for his/her medicines, the senior citizens thought government authorities would look back and appreciate what he/she had done during the Cha-Cha/Senior Citizens Affairs chair to monitoring and requiring compliance or must complaince with the Senior Citizens Law.

Lastly, we call on all senior citizens to demand the 20-percent discount and to explain to store cashiers or counters that the discount is doubled so if by the government when it is deducted from their income tax payable, and to inform them of the penalties, fine and imprisonment, imposed by law on violators.

Senior citizens cannot blame others for violating the law if they themselves do not assert their rights granted by the law.

—MAGDI F. CAYABU
7 Espina Compound,
E. Rodriguez Jr., Cubao City

Beyond reasonable doubt not a signatory for Cha-cha

THE FRONTPAGE "PEOPLE'S initiative" news item and the column of Fr. Joaquin Bernas concerning newly appointed Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento (PDI, 4/30/06) prompted me to send an affidavit.

I did not sign or will I ever sign, over if intimidated, threatened and/or bribed (afraid) will not accept), the "people's initiative."

I expect, Sops and pray that other individuals, who did not sign or will ever sign the "people's initiative" to likewise write to Assistants, so that their letters will serve as proof that their alleged signatures in the "people's initiative fen," advanced to the Comelec by the politicians and their cohorts for verification, have been forged and falsified.

I have a Comelec voter ID as a registered voter of Quezon City, Second District, Precinct No. 3239A. In if my name and address appear as one of the signatories of the "people's initiative," that is not true. Beyond reasonable doubt.

—RODRIGO A. PALAGGI I, JR.,
5 Big Horseshoe Drive,
Horseshoe Village,
1113 Quezon City

Supreme Court has spoken, but where's the ax?

REPLACING THE MEMBERS OF the Commission on Elections is too light a penalty for their role in the fake oil lollitan of prize unearthed for the Comelec's computerization program. ("Disconcerted," PDI, 4/14/06) For sure, ordinary citizens are punished just for stealing a few thousand pesos to ease their hunger.

The Comelec chair and commissioners do not admit their fault, but somebody doesn't have to be a rocket scientist to see that a substantial amount of public money has been wasted and this would have been used for more productive projects, said the Supreme Court has spoken: There were irregularities in the way the votes, action was conducted and procured.

But why is nobody being punished? In fact, those who appointed were responsible for the anomalous transaction are still holding on, or clinging to, their positions. Pisot!

Is this really a government of the people, for the people and by the people? Or is this a government for some people only specifically for those around and supporting the President?

—MICHAEL CAPUNO,
michael.capuno@ateneo.edu

LETTERS

Always a Filipino

I HAVE YET TO APPLY FOR THE re-acquisition of my Philippine citizenship. However, I consider myself a Filipino first and foremost. I am a proud Filipino-American (I am, I contribute my God-given talents to the Filipino community wherever I get an opportunity.

I buy my *pan de sal* and Pinoy goods at set-set stores. When I crave for *dinuguan*, I go to Filipino restaurants. My car has a Philippine flag inside, Iglesia ni Cristo and Filipino music) most of the time. My jacket easily tells others that I am a Filipino. In my house, we speak the tagalog, my dialect, you can also find in there Pinoy décor, and my long-neck bottle of Ugaquit Rhum From Sorsgon City is prominently displayed in the kitchen.

Whenever somebody asks me about the Philippines, I try to answer to the best way I can. Every day I read the Philippine Daily Inquirer on the Net. And most of all, I still pray, as I have been doing before, that life in the Philippines may become better.

My question to former Justice Isagani Cruz (in connection with his column "Dual Allegiance," PDI, 4/22/06): is: When did I abandon the Philippines? Just because I have left the Philippines and acquired a new citizenship, it does not mean that I have abandoned my native land. Or am I less Filipino? I remain a Filipino.

—BARRY DEL CASTILLO,
mulgamore@canada.com

First Mass in Philippines

THE PHOTO ON THE FRONT page of the April 19 issue of the Inquirer, featuring a headpiece for an in Southern Leyte, calls to mind the misnomer at least, geographic that the part of Leyte province is acting on an erroneous, really person via Barbidos, Limasawa Island, but somehow it's what happened to neighboring Limasawa Island long ago.

The debate on where the first Mass in the Philippines was held has not been put to rest. The official stand is that it was on Limasawa Island, but the issue has long advanced, with some compelling evidence, that it was in Masao, Butuan.

The tragic landslides on mountainside Southern Leyte may have happened in Limasawa also, thus obliterating the "complete" evidence. Authorities are looking for [illegible] into marine archaeologists [and others experts] looked into the matter?

—DAVID DAMIONGAGARES,
pistonsoul@yahoo.com

Not with PCEC on 'people's initiative'

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE paid advertisement of Signs ng Bayan, which was published in the April 27 issue of the Inquirer. The ad claimed that the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches of the Philippines (PCEC), represented by Bishop Efraim Tendero and Bishop Ford Meghoran, supports the "people's initiative" for Charter change. Bishop Tendero was, in fact, quoted as follows: "We are the people's initiative as a valid expression of the (people's support)."

I could hardly believe that the bishops could actually make such a statement on behalf of the PCEC. Can't be: see what the government is doing? I agree with those opposing Charter change for now: a genuine people's initiative means one initiated by the people; not ill-incited by people in government.

As an evangelical Protestant whose church is a member of the PCEC, I would like to categorically state: I do not support the people's initiative and I am against Cha-cha in the way the Arroyo administration wants to do it. I cannot support the joint initiative of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Speaker Jose de Venecia and their allies to perpetuate themselves in power.

PCEC leaders should know that it is wrong for them to assume they are representing the evangelical Protestants in this country every time they publicly make a stand on political issues. Bishops Tendero and Meghoran should consult the churches first before making public their stand on any issue confronting our country.

Since the time of President Marcos, some evangelical leaders have been expressing support for the wrong political leaders and making the wrong stand on many issues. It is a shame that they have not learned their lessons and persist in committing the same mistakes.

I therefore urge other evangelicals who are against the new mode of charter change to publicly protesting their views on political issues, to speak up so that PCEC leaders will know that they do not truly represent our sentiments.

—SHIELDANNA GARCIA,
millibanna@gmail.com

Role of church people in nation's political life

THIS IS IN REACTION TO AHMED CORTEZ' RANT (PDI, 4/13/06): "Whatever happens in this world happens because God allows it to happen." I agree that God allows everything to happen but He makes sure that those who sin against His people will be held accountable for their actions.

Cortez is trying to spiritualize the issues haunting the Arroyo administration and, subtly, cast the blame without anybody of what's happening around us, he jumps into the idea that "our wisdom is infinitesimally inconsequential before God."

I doubt if the wastrels are the plan of God as expressed in the Ten Commandments—a plan having established a nation of God-fearing leaders as seen in government scandals and corruption. Likewise, I doubt if he is aware that it is not part of God's plan for man to be abused or victimized by sin.

In Cortez saying that church people should be indifferent to the actual deception and graft and corruption that are now destroying our moral values, that they should preach only about the angels and saints in heaven and say nothing about the issues affecting the moral fiber/s/ of our political and economic life?

I believe that at this moment of our political crisis, it is critical moral values, a crisis of truth and justice. Civil authority must be held morally accountable. Denouncing immorality in public service and reminding public officials of the moral aspects of leadership are part of the church people's mission to preach the truth.

"Men and women have the specific duty to move always towards truth, to respect it and bear responsible witness to it." (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church No. 399)

—ROLANDO SALIDO,
rsgsalido_99@yahoo.com

Injudicious statement

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO PUNO'S statement about the unconstitutionality of the death penalty is premature and ethically questionable. ("SC Chief Justice: Death penalty is unconstitutional," PDI, 4/26/06)

As chief justice, he should refrain from uttering legal opinions on cases that are not before the court. But he seems to have forgotten the doctrine against the issuance of advisory opinions by any judicial body on an issue not submitted for its decision.

As the head of the highest court of the Philippines, he should refrain from basking in the political limelight and just keep his legal opinions to feigned decisions. Chief Justice Panganiban should act and speak like the Chief Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court.

—JESUS C. SUNTAY,
jesuisce@hotmail.com

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions, subscription problems or if you need photos for the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, 6016 Pasong Tamo, Makati City or send a fax to fax no. 8817-4703, 897-2638 or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

INQUIRER Visayas

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Marilyn L. Resendiz

SIPALAY MINING PROJECT

'Frightful' scenario or 'fantastic' claim?

By Hazel P. Villa
Bulls City

A BROAD ALLIANCE OF environmental activists in Negros Occidental raised fears of environmental pollution after sending an investigative mission to the southern city of Sipalay, site of confirmatory drillings of Giant Mining Development Corp. (GMDC).

Federal Parliamentary South Negros said it visited two Brgy.4, Barangay Manlocahoc in Sipalay on April 3-7 and found that the 200-hectare deposit area of the planned open-pit mine of GMDC "revealed a frightening scenario."

GMDC, however, said the claims of environmental destruction were "fantastic" because its confirmatory drilling activities were minimal.

According to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau regional office in Bulls City, GMDC has a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) of 2,901.4646 hectares for copper and other minerals in Sipalay about 335 km south of Bacolod City. It is currently undertaking confirmatory drillings within the MPSA area in Barangays Manlocahoc and Hinoba-an.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL mission team inspects the Manlocahoc and Catarman creeks, from Dumpit, Barangay Manlocahoc, Sipalay. These creeks are almost dead, not hospitable to living creatures. At right is a map showing Sipalay town in Negros Occidental.

High acidity

In an official statement released on April 8, Federal Parliamentary said that although GMDC is still at the final stage of its exploration, "the headwaters of the Manlocahoc and Catarman creeks that join the Sipalay River register an extremely high level of acidity of 1-2 pH, the lowest being 1.98."

"These creeks are almost dead, inhospitable to living creatures. The waters of the creek are reddish and coconut trees are dying along the banks of the creek. A hectare of rice land was covered by siltation from exploratory drilling operations," said the statement.

Federal Parliament is an alliance of environmental activists that include the party-list group Bayan Muna, Sitapion Farmers Federation, Negros Coalition for Environmental Protection, Bigkis sang Kabataan Development Group, Buklod Inc., Iglesia Filipina Independiente, Kasilak Incorporated Inc., Kristong Federation of Negros Workers, and the Alliance Magsasakang Pilipino.

Its probe team was led by Fr. Ben Dacon, chairperson of Federal Parliament's South Negros. Its members were among engineer Efren Fabilet, Greg Rubis, head of the social team; geologist Tibair Concepcion Anna Dayland Bermoy's national office; agronomist Dr. Chito MedCan; lawyer Nilo Rendin, a former researcher of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Research Bureau; and agriculturist Mike Medina, authorities on Environmental Science at the Visayas College.

The mission claimed it had seen GMDC operated by open-pit mine at Lepanto Mountain, Manlocahoc and Catarman creeks, the headwaters of Sipalay River would be covered by mine wastes and some 100 ha of still-irrigated rice fields would be destroyed.

Gregg Rubis, secretary general of Federal Parliament, quoted residents of Hinoba-an as saying that GMDC's drilling started in August last year and was supposed to end in December, but this was extended.

"Cebu Mines is supposed to drill 36 holes but as of our visit, they have drilled about 28 holes and might start operations sometime this year," said Rubis in a telephone interview Tuesday night.

All of the Times documentary will also be heavily edited. Track-Channels of mining operations will pollute the whole Sipalay River system. The tailings pond of the Sipalay River will be destroyed and the construction of Cebu Mines auxiliary facilities will definitely displace 439 families who have no clear alternative livelihood in their present productive lands," said the statement.

It is not only the farming areas that will be affected by the operations of Cebu Mines, said Federal Parliament, but also the city's rich marine ecosystems that run on the Olympic Tunnel River flowing into Aurora from the Department of Tourism this year.

Fantastic claims

"All these (environmental activities) claims are fantastic," said Gonzalo Ma. Dalton, vice president for operations and community support of JD Mayor and Associates, consultants of GMDC.

In a telephone interview, Dalton said GMDC's mining activities have been limiting so all to do with the claimed pollution in the Manlocahoc and Catarman creeks because the drilling activities were minimal.

"The acidity level also has nothing at all to do with the drilling. The high acidity level is direct because of the high mineral content in the area. Even the soil there is acid because it is full of manganese because of the high mineral content," added Dalton, a first cousin of Sen. Franklin Drilon.

"Today there is no way that you can have development projects without consciences. No way," said Dalton.

He said GMDC was strictly following environmental provisions of the Mining Act of 1995 by shelling out 1.6 percent of its initial capital expenditures for the mining project that will go to environment-related activities and two percent of operating costs for support of the community.

The Mining Act states that mining companies and operators should allocate a minimum of one percent from their direct mining and milling costs for the development of the host, neighboring municipalities and area/s, as well as to promote the general welfare of inhabitants in the area.

Also think, 1.6 percent of $26 million will go to environmental mitigation with a result ready up of stakeholders who have a say on how to manage their environment," said Dalton.

As he claims that a huge swath of Sipalay will be affected by GMDC operations, Dalton said the company would be mining only 300 ha or the 2,901.4646 hectares MPSA.

"Why should we worry so that and money at areas where there are minimal minerals?" he said.

Among other things, GMDC has been doing biological resource management since December and was extending indigenous resources for reforestation in Sipalay for a recovery that is started this year, Dalton said.

"We plan to reforest even before we operate. Our dream is [for] the mines [to] be a model for sustainable development," he added.

MGB support

The MGB regional office defended GMDC in an official statement dated April 9, or two days after the environmental activists' investigation mission.

"Contrary to popular belief, the whole area covered by the mining claim will not be mined but it is imperative to submit a bigger area to implement the reserves, have to know the feasibility of a mining project," read the MGB statement authorized by Regional Director Reynaldo M. Devanera.

The bureau said that for confirmatory drillings alone, GMDC, which has an operating agreement with Manlocahoc Holdings Philippines Inc., has spent P26.87 million.

It added that GMDC still had to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report to the DENR office. It has completed the exploration stage (that includes confirmatory drillings).

The MGB did not directly address the issue related to the pollution brought about by GMDC's confirmatory drillings but said it had been regularly monitoring its exploration activities to ensure compliance with the Environmental Work Program (EWP).

The EWP spells out the environmental activities that the company shall undertake to address the impact of its exploration activities, if there are any.

The MGB did not give other details related to the EWP but stated that it had "institutionalized stringent measures to ensure the compliance of mining contractors/operators with international widely accepted standards of environmental management."

Wedona Vitarzo, said DENR, was included in the government's 24 major mining project areas in the next five to six years because of its mineral deposits, specifically in the mineral-rich district of southwestern Negros Occidental.

The revitalization of the country's mineral industry is expected to generate $1 billion to the government with copper among the Philippines' major mineral reserves, said the bureau, quoting Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes.

Federal Parliamentary South Negros said Sipalay was facing a repeat of the mining disasters caused by the operations of Marcopper Mining Corp., which closed in 1991 after operating for 38 years, and Philex Mining Corp., which operated from 1994 to 2006.

Rains said the tailings ponds of the two mining firms spilled over several times in recent years and destroyed parts of the Sipalay River and its creeks and tributaries, as well as more than 400 ha of rice fields.

Residents around the mining sites also suffered toxic dermatitis and acute respiratory infections from gas emitted from the mine tailings, he claimed.

Drilon said GMDC would construct some dams that will act as filters before water from the mines meet into the rivers and other waterways.

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Bishop Cruz: 'Jueteng' back for polls

By Christer V. Esguerra

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP LEADING a campaign against "jueteng" said he was convinced the illegal numbers game has returned to help finance the campaign kitty of some politicians in next year's elections.

"Not far from now in the next elections [2007 elections]," Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said in a statement. "It is not surprising as all that jueteng is once again back in business."

Cruz, leader of the Iglesiang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, did not name any politician supposedly dipping his finger in the underthe-table pots under ground lottery.

But a look back at recent statements in the Senate meeting investigations last year suggested that "jueteng money was used to make a difference in the 2004 national elections," he said.

Citing reports from his group's 62 chapters nationwide, the archbishop said jueteng was "slowly but surely invading" all provinces in Regions 1 and 2, Tarlac, Zambales, Pampanga, Bulacan, Cavite, Batangas, Quezon, and Camarines Sur.

Cruz said the report even named people running the show in these provinces, including the so-called "payola coordinators." He did not make the names available, though.

"Like a cat with proverbial nine lives, jueteng in this country keeps coming back like a bad dream," he said.

"Those in power and influence cling to it still for a reason, and as well, likewise have it retained for a purpose. At one time it is eventually all gone. After some time, it is surprisingly slowly but surely back."

Jueteng has returned with the government-sponsored Small Town Lottery as its front in some provinces.

Described by critics as a legalized version of jueteng, the STL has been heavily criticized by Church leaders.

Archbishop Paciano Aniceto of San Fernando, Pampanga and Bishop Socrates Villegas of Balanga, Bataan issued statements saying they didn't want the numbers game anywhere in their jurisdiction.

In them, Cruz said, he vowed to fight a bloody battle against gambling, found outspoken allies.

One yesterday noted his ten-point campaign featuring operations, "only individuals who are shameless, callous and the scourge of society could have the gall to be jueteng principals," he said.

"Those who unrepentantly bank them up are even greater liabilities to society. At all of them strategy a special place of dishonor here and now, theirs must also be a distinct level of condemnation hereafter and beyond—irrespective of their belief and value system."

WAR DANCE
Kalinga natives perform a dance that the province's governor, Dominador Bilas Jr., refuses to call a war dance to erase the province's image as a region of tribal conflicts. The recent 13th Peacemakers Day of Kalinga focused on peace in daily agricultural life.

NOTICE TO DELINQUENT MEMBERS OF SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB

In accordance with the provisions of its Articles of Incorporation and By-laws, the Board of Directors of Subic Bay Yacht Club Inc., has approved for auction the membership shares corresponding to the following membership share number and stock certificate numbers due to the delinquency in their payments of their outstanding obligations to the Club:

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS				REGULAR MEMBERS				CORPORATE MEMBERS			
MEM #	STOCK Cert. No.	MEM #	STOCK Cert. No.	MEM #	STOCK Cert. No.	MEM #	STOCK Cert. No.	MEM #	STOCK Cert. No.	MEM #	STOCK Cert. No.
0004	000720	0041	001080	0108	001328	0179	000486	0000	000756	0180	001473
0006	000722	0042	001081	0109	001329	0180	000487	0001	000757	0181	001474
0007	000088	0043	000819	0194	001038	0001	001479	0002	000758	0182	001475
0007	000800	0058	000880	1160	001357	0002	000761	0188	000778	0188	000481
0008	001324	0134	000881	1161	001362	0003	000762	0189	000779	0189	000482
0009	001404	0184	001481	0184	001432	0046	000763	0191	001486	0190	000483
0003	000305	1466	001182	1166	001322	0002	000800	0209	001384	1228	001470
0140	000306	1467	001183	1167	001323	0003	000801	0210	001385	1229	001471
0139	000307	1468	001184	1168	001324	0004	000802	0211	000886	1230	001472
0140	000417	1501	001185	0027	000771	0010	000803	0212	000887	0008	001111
0141	000418	0004	001186	1164	001431	0011	000804	0213	000888	0009	001112
0204	000346	1774	001340	1166	001433	1620	000805	0217	000812	1166	001113
1002	001021	1403	000758	0006	000918	0041	001171	0218	001804	0008	001114
1452	001128	1337	000759	0007	000919	0042	001172	0219	001805	0009	001115
1864	001545	0005	001090	0012	000958	0006	000773	0220	000826	1166	000800
0210	000345	0177	000820	1160	001030	0000	000774	0221	000827	1167	000801
0004	001109	0178	000821	1161	001031	0004	000775	0222	000828	1168	000802
0005	001127	0179	000880	1500	001408	0417	000780	0223	000829	1173	001334
0733	000800	0007	000881	0002	000478	0002	001115	0224	000830	1174	001335
0005	000806	1008	000882	0004	000479	0003	001116	0225	000831	1175	001336
0006	000806	1444	001182	0005	000480	1200	001222	0226	001802	1176	001337
0007	000807	1445	001183	0006	000481	0000	001223	0227	001803	1177	001338
0008	000808	0003	001184	0007	000482	0000	001224	0228	001804	1178	001339
0009	000809	0004	001185	0008	000483	0000	001225	0229	001805	1179	001340
0010	000810	0005	001186	0009	000484	0000	001226	0230	001806	1180	001341
0011	000811	0006	001187	0010	000485	0000	001227	0231	001807	1181	001342
0012	000812	0007	001188	0011	000486	0000	001228	0232	001808	1182	001343
0013	000813	0008	001189	0012	000487	0000	001229	0233	001809	1183	001344
0014	000814	0009	001190	0013	000488	0000	001230	0234	001810	1184	001345
0015	000815	0010	001191	0014	000489	0000	001231	0235	001811	1185	001346
0016	000816	0011	001192	0015	000490	0000	001232	0236	001812	1186	001347
0017	000817	0012	001193	0016	000491	0000	001233	0237	001813	1187	001348
0018	000818	0013	001194	0017	000492	0000	001234	0238	001814	1188	001349
0019	000819	0014	001195	0018	000493	0000	001235	0239	001815	1189	001350
0020	000820	0015	001196	0019	000494	0000	001236	0240	001816	1190	001351
0021	000821	0016	001197	0020	000495	0000	001237	0241	001817	1191	001352
0022	000822	0017	001198	0021	000496	0000	001238	0242	001818	1192	001353
0023	000823	0018	001199	0022	000497	0000	001239	0243	001819	1193	001354
0024	000824	0019	001200	0023	000498	0000	001240	0244	001820	1194	001355
0025	000825	0020	001201	0024	000499	0000	001241	0245	001821	1195	001356
0026	000826	0021	001202	0025	000500	0000	001242	0246	001822	1196	001357
0027	000827	0022	001203	0026	000501	0000	001243	0247	001823	1197	001358
0028	000828	0023	001204	0027	000502	0000	001244	0248	001824	1198	001359
0029	000829	0024	001205	0028	000503	0000	001245	0249	001825	1199	001360
0030	000830	0025	001206	0029	000504	0000	001246	0250	001826	1200	001361

The minimum bid is set at Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00) for Individual Membership shares and Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (P400,000.00) for Corporate Membership shares. Transfer and application fees of Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) shall be paid by the winning bidder.

If no bids be received or if the winning bidder fails to pay the amount of his bid within 24 hours after the bidding, the Club may in its discretion appropriate the share itself in the amount equivalent to the outstanding obligation of the member plus interest and other charges. In the event that the Club refuses to exercise said right the auction procedure may be repeated from time to time at the discretion of the Membership Committee, with the share of stock is sold. (Article X Sec. 1 of the By-Laws)

The complete Rules Governing the Auction of Delinquent Shares are available at the Membership Services Department.

The auction proper shall be held on May 22, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the Mezzanine Floor, Waterfront Subic Convention Center, Bldg. #761, Aplaya Area, Subic City.

For further inquiries, please contact the office of the undersigned at Tel. No. 031-1542 or the Membership Services Department at tele.6317, (047) 252-5211.

(Sgd.) ATTY. DAMASCO R. FLOR
Corporate Secretary

(PNA)—May 6, 2006)

Camp teaches 'sex energy' sans religion

BACOLOD CITY—Despite concerns' fear **Some children due as much to its set camps as the wonders**

But a unique summer camp here has been attracting parents because it helps their children understand sexuality.

The Ninth Center/Center for Primitive Healing (his newly taught children, some as young as 5 years old, the concepts of sexual energies in a two-day jolin camp sponsored by a medical drug firm. The learners sought to help them understand sexuality and to learn to respect the process of reproduction.

Seth Sawen, the camp's teacher and a "master" at the Primitive Healing Foundation of the Philippines, said primitive healing's definition of sex and the sexual act has attracted both mainstream and radical advocates of population control because it teaches sexuality without the baggage of religion.

The Catholic Church has objected to aggressive population control programs that introduce artificial birth control measures. It also frowns upon sex education that discusses these methods.

Sawen, who teaches chemistry at a high school in Negros Islands, said nongovernment organizations have been asking about primitive healing for reasons other than they realized that its teachings about sex are nondenominational.

Primitive healing was popularized by Chinese-Filipino Chon-Kok Sui in 1987, and gained some measure of global recognition by the 1990s.

Primitive healing ancients that the human body's natural aura, or spiritual energies, has the capacity to heal itself, so healers are trained to remove damaged energies from the body by replacing them with fresh spiritual energies.

At the camp on Tuesday, Sawen taught a group of children and tweens that "sex is not bad" because "sexual energy is the fertilizer for higher energies."

He taught the group yoga exercises that would help them transform their sexual energies to other chakras in Sanskrit term that refers to centers of aura in the body that vitalizes life.

For example, sexual urges in the navel (or sexual chakra) can be routed to a higher chakra (like the throat, which Sawen describes as representative of "higher creativity," or the forehead that personifies "dynamic intelligence."

Ordinarily a child of eight should be able to grasp that concept, Sawen said, but the Negros camp is trying to determine whether children as young as five or six can also understand the idea that spiritual energies surround every human being.

Sawen said the Primitive Healing Foundation had been conducting workshops around Metro Manila in hotels for the past two years now, and has developed a child-friendly curriculum.

But teaching children is daunting, she said.

Despite Sawen's soothing background, she had to forsake all one lecture when the children's attention began to shift. Vincent Gabrese, Phi Net-Work Latest Bureau

IBP seeks tight security for lawyers in Ecleo case

By Jhemon Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY— THE INTEGRATED BAR of the Philippines (IBP) Cebu City chapter has asked the Cebu City Police Office (CCPO) to provide security to six lawyers who volunteered to serve as private prosecutors of the parricide case against suli leader Rahan Ecleo Jr.

Lawyer Max Tolentino, the chapter's president, on Thursday requested CCPO chief Supt. Melvin Sayaris to ask for police protection for the lawyers after two of them received threats through text messages.

Tolentino identified the lawyers who received the threatening text messages as Nestor Pimentel and Erma Ong. The other private prosecutors are Petty Quebecola, Sir Enriquez, Bonifacio C. Sinorvaza and Alberto Espejo.

Tolentino said he believed the threats were related to the parricide case against Ecleo, who was accused of killing his wife Alona Encinid Ecleo in 2002, because the messages were received after Cebu Regional Trial Court Judge Geraldine Faith Econg ordered a medical examination of Ecleo, who was freed on a P1-million bail in 2004 to undergo heart tests.

Econg ordered a reexamination to determine if Ecleo was really sick.

Econg also ordered that additional pieces of evidence against Ecleo be admitted.

Tolentino said the people behind the text messages could be ecleoists because the text messages were in English and well-written.

Tolentino said the threats also appeared to be serious and the IBP could not afford to be complacent, especially after the previous private prosecutor, lawyer Ariel Sta. Ana Tungcu, was killed inside her house in 2004.

"It appears that the private prosecutors are scheduled not to attend the next hearing of the (Ecleo) case on May 12," Tolentino said.

The three text messages were both received by Pimentel and Ong on May 3. The first two came in an interval of just a few minutes while the third one came almost four hours later.

One message read: "Your life is in my hands, u are enrolled with my goons, I pity u, u must be ready everytime u go out, especially going to court, I think not LOL."

Another said: "ok u look outside somebody is watching u, u try to go out and mercilessly killing u, and making u a good target, u must be if mistake! see GOD."

The third message read: "Since ours is a, none ghost, we can see u, u don't see us, u must be ready 2 see it purer, u know when you die lolly...u must refrain attending our next hearing."

All three text messages came from cellular numbers 09142985044.

LABOR DAY protesters demand wage increase of as high as P125 in Davao City and P75 in some parts of the Visayas.

W. Visayas workers seek P75 wage hike

BACOLOD CITY— THREE LABOR GROUPS filed a petition for a P75 across-the-board wage increase at the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board in Western Visayas.

The petition cited rising prices of fuel and basic commodities as basis for the wage increase demand, said Carlos Bonoza, Department of Labor and Employment regional director.

The petitioners were the National Congress of Unions in the Sugar Industry of the Philippines, Congress of Independent Organizations and the Philippine Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Workers Union, all belonging in the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP).

Bonoza said the wage board members had deliberated on the petition and had asked the Department of Trade and Industry for price levels and economic data in Western Visayas to aid them in deciding whether or not to grant the petition.

The wage board will meet again this month to deliberate on the petition.

"There are implementing guidelines that we cannot disturb a wage order issued within a period of 12 months unless there are supervening conditions that exist," Bonoza said.

The last wage order was issued on June 18 last year, increasing by P13 the minimum wage of private sector workers in Western Visayas.

Bonoza, however, said only 7% percent of businesses in the region were complying with the wage order.

He said economic difficulties also resulted in the retrenchment of some workers.

The Bonoza said the figures released were as of October 2005, the employment rate in Western Visayas was 96.3 percent, higher than the national figure of 92.6 percent.

In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan ordered a review and possible issuance of a new wage order for workers in the private sector.

In his Labor Day message, Ampatuan said he recognized the need for additional wages.

A daily wage earner in the once impoverished region in the country is taking home P180 a day may bolster workers in Central Mindanao and other administrative regions.

Ampatuan's stated his intention is to set-up a committee how much an increase would be and whether the employers could afford it," the governor said.

The governor said paying workers fairly and nicely would make them productive that would eventually lead to more profits on the part of employers.

Lawyer Dean Sampaloc, ARMM executive secretary, said Ampatuan has scheduled a meeting with the business community and business leaders in the ARMM. — Carlo P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau and Alwin O. Avenido, PDI Mindanao Bureau

ROUNDUP

Village exec, wife slain

COMBOBO CITY— A village chief and his wife were killed in an ambush along the Barrera-Davao Highway in Barrio Magkinonan on Monday. Police said Mamkas Hara, 41, barangay chief of Bayanga, Buena, and his wife Concepcion, 38, died from multiple bullet wounds. The couple, aboard a motorcycle owned pass, was on their way to Bitcoby when gunmen emptied them, said Senior Supt. Ahmad Mamalima, police chief of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Mamalima said the killing could be personal or may be related to a family feud, which is common among tribe inhabitants of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur.

Charlie C. Lamera, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Bandits killed in Davao Sur

DIGOS CITY— A bandit leader in Juan Abad Santos, Davao del Sur died when an angry followers shot him on April 28, police reports said. The suspect Adil Tambingan, also an occupational harm dwelling, 39, leader of a bandit group operating in Juan Abad Santos and later in Sarangani province. Juan Abad Santos police chief Insp. Charlie Mercia said they learned of the killing only when Tambingan succumbed to the police on May 2. He is sought in connection with the murder of Tambingan's father-in-law Ruben Obedo. Mercia said in an encounter with the military. Mercia said the suspect blamed Ambong for his brother's death.

Victor J. Saavedra, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Drug pusher dead in Davao

LIMING CITY— A suspected drug pusher was killed in Talomo district here when the 10th Regional Public Safety Battalion operatives on Tuesday, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in Southern Mindanao said. Supt. Wilfredo Mirasolano, PDEA regional chief, said Julius Gonzaga, Aaron died he have his early 30s, was being arrested for possession of shabu. Gonzaga, police said, drew a handgun and tried to shoot the policeman, according to Mirasolano. Other police officers immediately fired at Gonzaga. Gonzaga died on the spot. He managed to the higher echelon of illegal organizations in the city," Mirasolano told the reporter.

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

6 inmates bolt jail

GORDOLON CITY— Six more inmates escaped from the Sarangani provincial jail early Saturday, at 5:30 a.m. of the jail facility said. The prisoners bolted jail by sawing off two wooden grills inside their cell, or provincial jail guard Pat Jovie Gamido said. The escapees were identified as Rizal Cervantes of Barrio, Sarangani City who is facing a murder case; Mike Rivera of Caraga, Misamis Del Sur; Clarissa Mirasolo, Sarangani City, murder; Christopher Llorente, Pilar, murder; Richard Bayden, Bonoan, rape; and Arnel Ramos, Categuman, murder. Three inmates were also able to escape last month.

Bobby B. Labrador, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bulusan watch

SORSOGON CITY— The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) warned of explosions in Mt. Bulusan anytime despite its cresting recession for the past three days. The Phivolcs issued this warning after a small eruption lasted 7 minutes (April 28), to a possible second lasted Tuesday. Phivolcs asked residents around the volcano to keep off the 4-km danger zone as Bulusan continued to show signs of erupting. After the small eruption on Saturday, thousands stood with steam pouring billowing 1,100 meters above its summit. The Phivolcs bulletin said only two volcanic quakes were recorded in the past 24 hours.

Bobby B. Labrador, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Market administrator slain

CAMP AGUINALDO, Laguna—An administrator of a public market in Cavite was shot dead by unidentified suspects driving the Aguinaldo highway in Imus, Cavite at dawn Tuesday. Chief Supt. Prospero Nobleza, Calabarzon police director, identified the victim as Antonio Cy, 47, of Palace Homes, Barangay Anabo, Imus town. Noble said the victim was driving his bicycle to bring his wife to the public market when he was shot by the gunmen. Barangay Anabo where the was waylaid by gunmen in a car without a license plate. Noble said Cy died from two gunshot wounds in the body.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Woman dies in fire

CEBU CITY— A 48-year-old widow was crushed to death after a makeshift firecracker factory in Purok Anna Belt, Sitio Bago, Barangay Babag II, Lapu-Lapu City exploded at 9:25 p.m. on Tuesday. Marina Bordon, 48, a mother of two and resident of Sitio Bago, was nothing the victim of a Judas Belt firecracker when it exploded and ignited other firecrackers and chemicals inside the factory. SPO4 Alfonso Bantin, investigator of the Lapu-Lapu City Fire Station, said Bordon died on the spot due to severe injuries and burns. The fire department placed the property damage at P15,000. Bordon said the fire department is coordinating with the police department and the family of Bordon to find out if the owner of the makeshift factory, Hilarion Bordon, could be charged criminally.

Jhemon Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Group gets new members

CAMP SIONGCO, ILIANG, Lanao del Norte—The provincial chapter of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) was organized here on April 29 with at least 12 members of families of victims of heinous crimes and politically motivated killings in the province as the group's members. Charito Jimenez, VACC chair, said the group was organized to help the victims' families know their rights, to help them find justice for their relatives and to ensure protection for themselves. Earlier, the group told Jimenez that their cases were moving slowly. Police said at least 12 people in Lanao have been killed since the 2004 elections.

Pete U.A. Jarlos, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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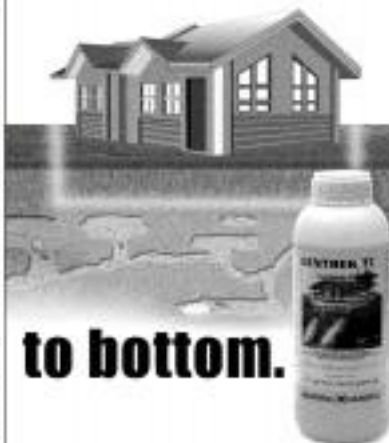

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Aplus METRO
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

WHAT'S INSIDE

- A new look for Metro Manila jeepneys /A20
- Search launched for road heroes /A20
- A touch of magic at Manila's Baywalk /A21

NBI agents uncover 'mixed' cement hoard in Metro raids

Adulterated materials threat to public safety

By Tina G. Santos

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGA... (NBI) seized P1.5-million worth of adulterated cement following a series of raids on several establishments last week.

NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD) chief Jose Yap said the practice, popularly referred to as "hardin," involves mixing cement with limestone and other filling materials and placing them in sacks that were either stolen or carried fake labels. "The cement does not harden properly and poses a grave threat to public safety," Yap said.

Armed with search warrants issued by the Manila Regional Trial Court Judge Antonio Eugenio Jr., Bureau agents swooped down on Darling Plastic Industries in Valenzuela City where they confiscated more than 150,000 empty cement/rice bags and four tables stamps used to imprint fake labels on the sacks.

Illegal hoard

In another incident, 560 empty sacks, 150 sacks of limestone and 15 sacks of "mixed" cement were found stored at D&M Trading, a hardware store in Antipolo City last week.

Over 70 empty sacks and a heavy-duty sewing machine used to stamp the logo were also seized in a sewing facility also owned by D&M Trading in Taytay City, the NBI said.

Yap said the owning establishments were subjected to a two-month surveillance operation before they conducted the raids with the help of Republic Cement Corp., Lafarge Holdings Inc. and Pozzuolan Gemenit Corp., owners of the "Republic," "Phoenix" and "Continental" trademarks. Charges of violations of the intellectual property code are now being readied against the owners of the establishments. With Jerrold Uy, trainee

Patient falls from hospital's third floor

By Nancy C. Carvajal and Jocelyn R. Uy

A 47-YEAR-OLD PATIENT AT THE LUNG CENTER of the Philippines (LCP) in Quezon City fell to his death from the hospital's third floor yesterday.

The patient was identified as Alexander Lopino Berenguer, a resident of Tondo, Manila.

Dr. Rey Ocampo, LCP deputy administrator for medical services, told the Inquirer that Berenguer had been confined at the charity ward since May 1 for emphysema.

"I was just informed that the patient had suicidal tendencies and had tried to commit suicide by slashing his wrist before he was brought here," said Ocampo.

A witness said Berenguer jumped from the bathroom on the third floor.

Before the incident, nurses were looking for Berenguer because he was not in his room. The nurses told police that they thought their patient had escaped because he had requested to visit his wife but he seemed to go home.

Rescue at Roxas

In Pasay City, meanwhile, traffic on Roxas Boulevard was snarled for hours after a man threatened to jump from the roof of a two-storey videoke bar on the East Service Road, near the corner of Gil Puyat Avenue, at around 2 p.m.

Relly Deriada, 27, stood on a protruding steel bar at the roof of the tiny three-floor Katanduanes bar and kept rumblers at bay for about four hours by threatening to jump.

City police chief Senior Supt. Rosendo Francia said Deriada had fought with his wife before the incident. The Pasay City Rescue Team and members of the special Response and Tactics Team immediately went to the scene to negotiate with Deriada.

"But he was shouting so noisy. All he said was that he had a fight with his wife," city police chief Senior Rosendo Francia told the Inquirer.

After a few hours, Deriada jumped onto the condominium's concrete signboard, a few feet below the roof, and then onto a nearby ledge, where rescue workers brought him down. He was taken to the Manila Doctors Hospital here.

Francia said the the incident showed traffic along Roxas Boulevard and minor streets in Pasay City became "different in this area."

A new look for Metro Manila's jeepneys

Color-coded PUJs set them apart from 'colorum' vehicles on the road

By Christine D. Avendaño

THE SO-CALLED "KING OF THE Road" will soon be getting a makeover, courtesy of the government.

Three taxi and transportation officials yesterday launched in Malacañang the "Makisaya, Rjeepney Ka," Jeepney Sinap Holdero project, which aims to draw more tourists to the country, and also get rid of "colorum" or illegal public utility jeepneys (PUJs) in Metro Manila.

The launching was attended by President Macapagal Arroyo.

New image

Under the project, some 1,000 "Kings of the Road" will get a fresh coat of paint, as well as stickers that promote top tourist destinations in the country.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said that in line with Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board project, public jeepneys will be "color-coded."

Choices

For example, jeepneys plying routes in Makati will be painted blue while those in Manila will be yellow; Quezon City, on the other hand, will have red jeepneys.

In his Decision said the Department of Tourism had made over 100 jeepneys plying the Makati-Taguig route. Next on the list are Manila-bound jeepneys.

There were also a plan to include other public utility jeepneys in "tourist control destinations" outside of Metro Manila, he added.

Icons

"We're just making sure our jeepneys are good to look at because it is our means markets in Korea and Europe, the jeepneys are regarded as timeless icons," Durano said.

"When you say Philippines, they think about the Philippine jeepney. It will be an incentive for jeepney drivers if you name us on our stickers and make over your jeepney," he told reporters.

Accreditation

But before they can take part in the "Sinap" project, the jeepneys would have to be accredited by the LTFRB, according to Durano, to that these operating illegally would be weeded out of the ranks of registered public utility jeepneys.

Drivers will also get a cool final makeover: the color of their jeepney. "We will also give them uniforms so they'll look nice," Durano said.

COOL CUSTOMER
A woman buys a block of ice from a vendor in a canteen in Manila, where the temperature hits a daily high of 33 degrees Celsius. The weather bureau says it will remain hot in the city until the end of the month. AFP

Transport groups want fare hike

By Dexter L. Lucas

A COALITION OF VARIOUS transport groups is set to file a consolidated petition for a fare hike next week despite the Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board's stated thus it will not entertain any petition for an increase until diesel prices fall P35 per liter.

"Diesel fuel is now being sold at P34.97 per liter," said Nigor Mendoza, a lawyer who represents the United Transport Coalition (UTC). "It is already a foregone conclusion that it will go higher than P35."

The UTC is composed of the country's largest public transport groups, operators of buses and jeepneys plying the metropolis.

The group did not say how much it wanted, although the Philippine Confederation of Drivers and Operators Alliance of Concerned Transport Organization has a pending petition for a P1.50/km hike for jeepneys.

Know any heroes on the road?

By Jocelyn R. Uy

HELPFUL DRIVERS ARE GOING silly porcine-style to motists, motorcyclists and cyclists. But they need to be so, because driving in Metro Manila's streets is not for the faint of heart.

Still, DoubleStar Philippines, a top tire manufacturers, has launched a nationwide search for four highway heroes or "Bayani ng Kalsada"—to honor drivers who have performed heroic acts of courtesy, another indication of civility on the road.

"We are launching this search because we want to change the perception of how people look at Filipino commercial drivers," DoubleStar marketing director Jon Lauren said in an interview.

Those qualified to nominate are PUJ or taxi drivers, jeepney drivers, truck or bus drivers and drivers of privately owned vehicles.

Nominations may be submitted to all DoubleStar service and Tyre-pro outlets nationwide or at PO Box 7265, Domestic Airport, Manila.

Sleeping on the job?

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

GRACE CASIMIAL, POET D SLAVE for assignment at the Cebu port as customs collector, has been directed temporarily to the Iloilo Freeport.

This in favoritism for Cebu customs collector Leandro Mascariñas, refuses to budge despite an order from her superiors transferring her to the Iloilo port.

Mangisinong and another customs collector Ricardo Ito of the Manila International Container Port, who also refuses to obey a reassignment order from superiors, have obtained a temporary restraining order (TRO) from a court.

The TRO will expire soon.

Meanwhile, Casimial, while waiting for her Cebu reassignment order to be carried out, should use hibernate at she is faced with a big problem in her temporary assignment.

Casimial's problem is the taxpayer smuggling of liquor and cigarettes at the Iloilo Freeport.

A relative of her predecessor is allegedly behind the smuggling activities, my sources say.

Why do Collectors Mascariñas and Ito refuse to obey orders for their transfer from their superiors?

The two are reportedly not performing well in their present assignments.

The answer is an obvious one by an idiot would not know the reason behind the transfer.

* * *

Let's talk some more about customs.

Two alleged women smugglers in their 40s are using the name of a Cabinet official to check cargoes will not be inspected and will not be given high valuation.

My customs sources say these two women have temporarily taken cover from a notorious smuggler who allegedly acted as a front for a fourteen-taker smuggling team.

The siblings are lying low at the moment, but my spies say they will soon be back with a vengeance.

* * *

Customs agents and police-men raided Thursday warehouses inside a compound in Tondo, Manila.

The compound housed several warehouses believed to be the source of smuggled and fake liquor sold in the malls.

These smuggled goods could not have been taken out of customs bonded warehouses as said the giant if customs intelligence agents were doing their job.

Glenn Tuazon, chief of the intelligence division of the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS), seems to be sleeping on the job.

METROBRIEFS

Magic festival

AUD magicians in the entertainment field perform together at the Rajah's tent on Roxas Boulevard. At 8 p.m. today, the Manila City government will kick off a month-long magic festival which will feature members of the Bulgarian Foundation Inc., the biggest association of magicians in the country, at the Rajah Sulayman Park. Tents will be set up in the area, featuring puppet shows and face painting from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. For information, call 525-0831 to 35 local 2 or 7 p.m.

Lira B. Santos

Marian procession

A DAY HOME, processions of Our Blessed Mother will be held at 6:30 a.m. today at the Shrine Shrine plaza as part of a celebration in honor and solemnity of Mother Mary. Mass will be held at 7:30 a.m. and a 30-minute documentary on the shrine, it's Vic Rosales, parish priest, said. For information, please call or text 0917-6221958.

Parish concert

PATRON-ONE, choirs from the Good Shepherd Parish of Las Piñas will perform at Greenpit at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall on the Mandaluyong City Hall grounds, Mandaluyong, at 4 p.m. today. The concert is the highlight of celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of the Good Shepherd Parish. Choirs composing the group are: Mother Mary, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, Our Lady of Sorrows, Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of the Rosary

Blair under pressure to quit after poll losses

LONDON—BRITISH PRIME MINISTER Tony Blair was poised to redouble his scandal-plagued Cabinet on Friday after the governing Labor Party suffered heavy losses in local elections across England.

Any shake-up, however, was dismissed by a number of Blair's party so no more than "rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic," with the prime minister under growing pressure to announce a date for his own departure from office.

Results from 311 out of the 176 local authorities in England voting part in the polls showed that Labor had suffered a net loss of 239 council seats.

In contrast, the main opposition Conservatives gained 247 seats, giving a big boost in new party leader Cameron in his first real test of his leadership.

The smaller opposition Liberal Democrats, also with scores leader, had a poor showing, with a net gain of three seats, while the right-wing British National Party did relatively well, capturing at least 21.

The final outcome is due later Friday.

Labor is reeling from two of its darkest weeks since taking office nine years ago, following a raft of problems including a sex scandal, a foreign prisoner row and financial donor allegations.

The fund-raiser has taken its toll, with a growing number of voters shunning Blair's party for the Conservatives.

It took a particularly bad beating in London, where control of all 32 local authorities was being contested.

Among the casualties, Hammersmith and Fulham, in west London, returned to Conservative control from Labor for the first time since 1964.

Trying to put a brave face on the

JUDGE Laurie Bridgeman presiding over the trial of al-Qaida plotter Zacarias Moussaoui in this March 13 courtroom drawing. —AP

Jail, death 'with a whimper' for Moussaoui

ALEXANDRIA, VA.—JUDGE Leonie M. Brinkema sentenced Zacarias Moussaoui to prison for the rest of his life on Thursday, saying that he will be denied his wish to die in a blaze of glory and instead "will die with a whimper."

Moussaoui exchanged barbs with the judge, and bluntly mentioned who had loved ones once killed him in his face. Moussaoui, in his last chance to be heard in public, delivered a speech about his hatred for America, concluding: "God never listens to you and never listens like you. You'll never get him."

Brinkema was clearly angered that when the jury spared them to death life in 9/Wednesday, he had pushed that "America had lost" and he had won. She told him, "You will spend the rest of your life in a super-maximum security facility, to serve of witnesses and losers, it's quite clear who won and who lost."

Brinkema, who had been scrupulous about maintaining a neutral stance during the trial, vocalized by saying, "In his you, Mr. Moussaoui, you came here to be a martyr and to die in a great big bang of glory, but, to paraphrase the poet T.S. Eliot, instead you will die with a whimper."

Some family members of Sept. 11 victims in the audience seemed to be heard. Rosemary Dillard, whose husband died on American Airlines Flight 77 when it crashed into the Pentagon, looked at him and said: "I hope that you sit in that jail with your sweaty self and keep seeing the sun, without any contact with the world and that your name never comes up in any newspapers again during the rest of my life."

Moussaoui then took the stand to tell his own story. He said that Americans have "no

WORLDBRIEFS

Toxic water in India

LUCKNOW, India—Millions of people frequently ridden northern India are drinking water laced with arsenic-causing chemicals, a government minister said Friday. It myself released this week by the public health department in India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, said the water was "not fit for human consumption" and could lead to cancer and other illnesses. Contaminated wells in 61 districts, mud and sandstone were present in groundwater sources tested in 42 out of 70 districts, State Labor Development Minister Mukhtar Hussain Khan said, describing the findings as "frightening." "Don't contemplate, it is very difficult to purify this water," the report added. AFP

De Villepin hits back

PARIS—French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin on Tuesday hit back from a day over claims he lied about a dirty tricks campaign at the heart of his government, denying he ordered a secret inquiry into Socialist rival Nicolas Sarkozy. He used a monthly press conference to dismiss calls for his resignation over the so-called Clearstream affair, despite accusations that he has repeatedly deceived parliament and the public. But in a sign of the prime minister's growing isolation, the right-wing newspaper Le Figaro—normally a loyal government supporter—published an editorial calling on him and the German Party (PS) opposition to openly branding him a liar. "Why did he repeatedly—let us dare to say the word—lie about the creation of this ...? ...ul's narrow connection with three nearly dead Pygs?" the paper asked. AFP

DE VILLEPIN REUTERS

Dozens killed in Iraq

BAGHDAD—At least 28 people were killed and scores hurt Thursday amid continued political horsemanship over the formation of the next government in Iraq, officials and witnesses including they gave Israeli people. The US military said Iraqi soldiers gave differing versions of the day's deadliest assault in the restive town of Ramadi, with hospital sources saying 15 civilians had been killed that US officials said a US spokesman saying eight rebels had been killed in a gunbattle. Nine people were killed in the capital when a suicide bomber blew himself up in front of a southwestern near the impoverished district of Sadr City in the second suicide attack in Iraq's capital. Despite the Iraq in less than 24 hours. In other attacks, Brig. Gen. Mohammad Rasa Abdelkarim, who was in charge of logistics for the Iraqi army in Baghdad, was shot dead as he was driving to work. AFP

Suharto hospitalized

JAKARTA—The condition of former Indonesian dictator Suharto remained unstable Friday, a day after he was rushed to a hospital following hemorrhaging in his brain, doctors said. Suharto, 84, was rushed to intensive care at Pertamina hospital in Jakarta Thursday. "The condition of Mr. Suharto has not been stabilized. We are trying to stop the bleeding and giving surgical transfusions" to increase his level of red blood cells, Mr. Suharto's condition told a press conference. The former autocrat has been hospitalized several times in the past for intestinal bleeding, stroke and heart problems. Suharto ruled Indonesia with an iron grip for more than three decades, before being overthrown amid mounting unrest in 1998. He has so far escaped trial for suspected massive corruption on health grounds, with lawyers offering medical evidence that he can no longer hold up before criminal prosecution. AFP

SUHARTO REUTERS

BUDDHA VENERATION

Novice monks pray during a ceremony to celebrate the Buddha's birthday at Chogye temple in Seoul May 5, South Korean Buddhists celebrated the 2,550th anniversary of Buddha's birth at temples across the nation. REUTERS

Use of contraception drops sharply in US

CONTRACEPTION USE HAS DECLINED strikingly over the last decade, particularly among poor women, making them more likely to get pregnant unintentionally and to have abortions, according to a report released Thursday by the Guttmacher Institute.

The decline appeared to have thwarted the reduction in the national abortion rate that began in the mid-1980s.

"This is turning back the clock on all the gains women have made in recent decades," Sharon L. Camp, the president of the institute, said.

Among sexually active women who were not trying to get pregnant, the percentage of them not using contraception increased to 11 percent from 7 percent from 1999 to 2001, the latest data available, according to statistics from data analyzed from the National Survey of Family Growth, a federal study.

The rise was more striking among women living below the poverty line: 14 percent were not using contraception in 2001, up from 8 percent in 1994. Seven-tell women—those who earned more than twice the poverty rate—were also less likely to use contraception: 10 percent did not use any in 2001, up from 7 percent in 1994.

The number of white women not using contraception increased to 9 percent from 7 percent. Hispanic women not using it increased to 12 percent from 9 percent, and black women not using it increased to 11 percent from 10 percent. NYT

Berlusconi ally gets 6 years for corruption

ROME—ITALY'S SUPREME COURT upheld a corruption conviction against a close ally of outgoing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi on Thursday, but quashed a six-year prison term for Cesare Previti for passing on bribes to judges.

Berlusconi and his business empire were not involved in the case but the two men's legal cases are entwined and they have both regularly accused the Milan magistrates of pursuing them for political motives.

Supporters of Berlusconi, who was dogged by corruption trials during his years in power, hope on the decision, saying it was linked to the defeat of his center-right coalition in elections last month.

"The era of the outer-left magistrates," Berlusconi's former lawyer Carlo Taormina, a member of the media tycoon's Forza Italia (Go, Italy!) party, told reporters.

Previti, who was defense minister in Berlusconi's first government in 1994, has no right of appeal but it was not yet clear whether he would go to prison.

Under a law passed by Berlusconi's government, judges can instead put defendants being sentenced to a more than 70 years old. The law, which came to be known as "Save Previti," was passed shortly after he turned 71 last year.

"We have been left alone to this battle, abandoned by everyone," said Alessandra Stanziones, one of his lawyers.

Previti's conviction has no direct effect on Berlusconi but a separate decision by the supreme court on Thursday touches more directly on the media tycoon.

The court, in the surprise ruling, said it had asked for a re-trial on case involving Berlusconi's Fininvest media empire and his publisher Mondadori to be re-opened at the appeals stage.

Berlusconi himself cannot be re-tried in the Mondadori case because a statue of limitations has kicked in, but it ensures he is legal wrangles to the spotlight just as he is trying to regroup the center-right before administrative elections. REUTERS

PREVITI, longtime aide of Italian premier Silvio Berlusconi and former defense minister in Berlusconi's first government in 1994. —AP

Darfur peace process in crisis

ABUJA—THE AFRICAN UNION'S year-old drive to bring peace to the devastated Sudanese region of Darfur was in crisis once again on Friday, after rebel fighters refused to sign a peace accord.

Despite massive pressure from international mediators, both insurgent groups at peace talks in Abuja defied the head of state of a series of 48-hour deadlines and rejected a prepared deal with the Khartoum government to end their war.

The chief AU mediator at the talks, Salim Ahmed Salim, said more meetings would take place at 9 a.m. after a stormy overnight session, but sounded far from optimistic about how the negotiations could proceed.

"It was rough and tough. I'm not over-optimistic. I think we've reached a point of reality," he told reporters in Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo's official residence in Abuja, the current venue of the peace talks.

"We've sent consultations to attend. But in the night of the principle of Darfur. It will be a hard time for the people of Darfur if, after all the efforts made and days spent, the (rebel) movements are still running," he warned.

Darfur, an arid desert region of western Sudan the size of France or Texas, erupted into civil war in early 2003 when armed local movements rebelled to demand more autonomy from the Arab-led government in Khartoum.

In response, the regime unleashed the Janjaweed militia, which launched brutal attacks against Darfur's largely black African population. The war has caused at least 180,000 deaths and left 2.4 million people homeless.

This week senior international envoys, including US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, came to Abuja to strongarm the warring parties into a peace deal which would allow humanitarian aid to flow and elections to be held.

The Western diplomats have raised the draft accord, pushing the government to offer better guarantees on the disarmament of the Janjaweed and on executing former rebels into the ranks of armed forces.

Following this intervention, Obasanjo and the current AU chair President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of Congo personally hosted Thursday's overnight session in a bid to persuade the parties to accept a deal.

But Mohammed Bajoil of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) said the draft peace accord failed to answer his group's demands for Darfur's three states to be united into a single autonomous region. —AFP

The WORLD

Edited by Lawrence B. Quirico

Pope hits China over bishop ordination

POPE Benedict XVI. (Inglesias/AFP/Getty Images)

VATICAN CITY—POPE BENEDICT SAID ON THURSDAY China's appointment of two Catholic bishops without his blessing was a "grave violation of religious freedom" as a standoff with Beijing over control of church posts escalated.

The bishops were consecrated this week despite Vatican opposition in what was seen as a major setback for relations between the Holy See and China, which had appeared to be improving in recent years.

The Vatican warned that Church law prescribed automatic excommunication for bishops and priests who conduct unauthorized consecrations, but the Pope's spokesperson said the Vatican did not have enough information to decide this at the moment.

"The Holy Father learned the news with deep displeasure," spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls said in an unusually strongly-worded statement.

He said the Vatican had information from China that bishops and priests there had come under "strong pressure and threats" to take part "contrary to their conscience" in the ordinations, which it branded as "illegitimate."

As Catholic mood-watching, concerns arise there are firmly rooted in sin are might not be fully responsible for it.

Asked by Reuters whether the Church's toughest sanction had been imposed on the bishops, Navarro-Valls indicated that the circumstances of the ordinations were not yet clear.

"There is something that are still [not] [about] [aforesaid, not at this moment," he said in an interview. "We still don't have all the information."

He statement warned on "the need to respect the freedom of the Church and the autonomy of its institutions from any external interference" and asked Beijing to stop "such unacceptable acts of violent ecclesiastical constraint."

The Vatican said the appointments did not help ties with China, which had flowered in recent years, raising expectations that diplomatic relations cut off in 1951 could be restored.

Navarro-Valls said, however, the Vatican would continue to seek dialogue with Beijing.

"This is another obstacle but our style is, nevertheless, to improve the dialogue," he said, speaking in English.

China's 14 million or so Catholics are divided between six "underground" church loyal to the Holy See and the state-approved church that respects the Pope as a spiritual figurehead but rejects effective papal control.

His Weigling was ordained Bishop in Datong traditional Roman province on Sunday. Two days later Liu Jinheng was also elevated in the eastern province of Anhui.

China defended the appointments by its state-run Catholic Church, saying they strictly followed democratic processes and fully respected the wishes of a majority of worshippers.

"So the Vatican's condemnation makes no sense," China's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

"We hold a sincere attitude toward improving Sino-Vatican relations and have made active efforts. We hope the Vatican side can support a good environment for improvement of the relationship," it said.

China and the Vatican severed ties after the 1949 Communist takeover and subsequent crackdown on religion. The Vatican switched official recognition to Taiwan, the self-ruled island China says is a breakaway province. Reuters

Nepal Maoists agree to peace talks

KATMANDU, NEPAL (AFP)—Nepal Maoists agreed Thursday to hold talks on ending their decade-long insurgency, clearing the way for the release of hundreds of jailed fighters.

The new interim Cabinet on Wednesday announced an indefinite ceasefire and removed the terrorist tag from the Maoists to try to lure rebel talks and bring peace to the war-wracked Himalayan nation.

The Maoists called their own three-month ceasefire last week and on Thursday agreed to discussions on ending the revolt in which more than 12,500 people have died.

It is the third time that the government and rebels have called ceasefires at the same time and tried to start peace talks, but on previous occasions negotiations broke down and the country was plunged back into conflict.

"We are removing term a dialogue process, feeling deep responsibility for people's aspirations toward democracy and peace," said the rebel chief Prachanda, whose name means "the fierce one."

"We hope that the peace talks will not fail this time."

Cabinet Minister Gopal Khanal (Hirtha) said earlier that more than a dozen rebel leaders from jails across the country.

Thousands of Maoists have been detained during the insurgency and the release includes and upto 700 Maoists, of all ranks, were currently held.

The Royal Nepalese Army website details 32 people on its "most wanted" list of Maoists, headed by Prachanda.

Once deadly foes, the political parties and the Maoists have last year brokered a loose alliance against King Gyanendra to challenge his absolute rule proclaimed in February 2005. They brought hundreds of thousands onto the streets.

The monarch, the constitutional head of the army, backed down in the face of mass protests, which left at least 17 people dead, and recalled parliament last month after a four-year break.

The politicians immediately latched plans to call elections to a body to rewrite the constitution and limit the powers of the king—a key demand of the Maoists who began their "people's war" in 1996 to overthrow the monarchy.

Cease-fire between the security forces have resulted in a stalemate although Generalist had vowed to crush the rebellion after he sacked the government.

PUSUSUS
Mount Merapi at Sleman district of Central Java province erupts May 5. More than 3,000 Indonesians have fled their homes as the first lava flow poured from the volcano. →

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RIDGE. Mayol (right) and Eagle Rivera are ready to stumble.

Mayol underdog in Tokyo title bid

By Recah Trinidad

TOKYO—EVERGREEN'S GAMAL-ran, "smaller and and cutie, Tokyo is in the grip of a spring fever but there'll be no with no'le park when Nedel Mayol of the Philippines goes for the WBC Boxing Council minimumweight championship at the Korakuen Hall here tonight.

Tonight at 8:00pm sunset (12:00 with 17 KOs), the unbeaten Filipino will represent the underdog who effilled weight to yesterday for his challenge against defending champion Eagle Rivera, a Thai \$30 bodyguard who fights with a Japanese tag.

Although Bandhon had initially canceled appearances over severe pounding, the 24-year-old Mayol dwarfed 1.52g, strutting listed of runners Ukpanese noodle weigh on the line of the

SPORTS, P.24

SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Mukerdroo

Tell us your feedback: inquirer.net/sportsmail/message to 2207 (Globe) or 2600 (Smart)

P'foods ends SMB run

By Jaconico W. Paye

ANTIPOLO CITY—STOPPED UP BY THEIR tough defense in the closing minutes, the Purefoods Chunkee Giants halted San Miguel's seven-game winning streak with an 83-75 decision in the Ginoo Makabayan Brandy PBA Philippine Cup yesterday at the Araneta Center.

"There was no way we can beat San Miguel if we challenged them in a shooting game," said Giants Coach Ryan Gregorio, adding that San Miguel averages 95.2 points per game.

More than just ending the longest winning run of the season, Gregorio said the Giants pushed sixth elimination to grab a share of the lead with the Beermen at 5-2.

"We knew the odds were against us coming in to this game," said Gregorio. "We're always had a hard time beating San Miguel, we've always had a hard time playing here (in Pasaig). There were so many (distractions). But we were so focused on playing hard and winning for the game."

James Yap represented for the Giants by pumping in 11 of his 19 points in the second half.

Ginoo Brito's inside presence for the Beermen put the Giants' lead in jeopardy, 71-70, early in the fourth quarter.

But Jeffy Reyes made his key basket in the late game and the Giants held the Beermen scoreless in the last three minutes of play for the win.

The Giants fought the Beermen tot-and-tail late in the first half. Led by Marc Pingris, who drilled in six straight points in the second quarter, the Giants retrieved the Beermen's lead in three, 27-24.

In the second game, Red Bull nailed its first back-to-back victories in the conference, powering on an 48-21 spurt that was fring Cheeks to frustrated out a 121-97 win.

Red Bull went 6-6, dropping MCI to 4-4.

The score:

PUREFOODS—L. Yap 11 P. Yap 3 Jaspet 10 Reyes 19, Ginoo 7 Gonzalez 7 Abad 6 Pingris 6 Andrei 2, Ao 2.

SAN MIGUEL 75—Seigle 21 Fonz 13, Montreal 2 Salgado 8 Arnaiz 4 Daniel 2 Asinas 2 Babol 2 Cabas 0

Standard: 16-21, 40-41, 63-63, 83-75

PANIBUKLOS Fabionela Custodio (14) and Patricia Obnoski (r) collide trying to steal and return on third base during a flooded aquaseven play. An error forced obnoski to stop Cindy Curti Bacay. AJH ANGELES

Aribal homers power Air21-AdU past Manila

By Mars Anthony Reyes

JOSEFA ARIBAL HOMERED IN THE FOURTH and sixth innings, capping a seven-run AdU Adamson burst, as the Lady Falcons came from behind to defeat Manila, 10-7, in the Philippine Open women's softball championship at the Rizal Memorial Stadium.

Ms. Ian Garbin, Lovely Gerdenzig, Sam Jane Agravante, Mary Joy Lanzarote and Isabel Aguilar all chipped in as the team from the fourth inning as AdU Adamson burst from a 1-1 deficit as cruise to its fifth victory against a loss.

The Lady Falcons' fiery hings allowed Manila whose Sedan duke Gem Hustard scored duste Lorraine Gerdenzig running to give the host squad the top, pothead, 2-1.

"I think Gem Hustard was spectacular but it wasn't enough to dishearten AdU Adamson," said Manila coach Mona Santiago, herself a former Adamson standout in the 1960s.

Aribal's first blasted a 1-1 pitch to the fourth to ring to the backyard of the Rizal Aquatic Center. And then, after Garbin, Gerdenzig, Agravante, Lanzarote and Aguilar made it 9-5, Aribal smacked darter Mikeinda Custodio's 1-1 pitch to left field.

SCORES TODAY
(AQP Diamond)

Men: 9 a.m.—PUP-U Mabs (an El Elicio)—PUP-Sta Mesa (El Al a.m.—Gilcayan vs Davao

(Rizal Memorial Field)

Women: 9 a.m.—UP-M Ateneo (PUP-U Mabs (1 p.m.—Ateneo vs Manila; 3:30 p.m.—PUP-Sta Mesa vs Adamson; 5:30 p.m.—Lyceum (Ele), 4 p.m.—PUP-Sta Mesa vs Manila; 6:30 p.m.—Manila vs Adamson

Later in the day the21-Adamson outburst sent Bombol Bruins, the Dolphins Jessan Villavicencio to the Pogo Arena Dolphins, which opted to Aribal off its remaining games in order to take part in the Holy Week Parishioner in Pasig City this weekend.

Lady fiery kept pace with AdU, Adamson by substituting both PEP and Rubiano, 7-5.

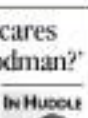
With the wins and one close upset, the21-Adamson and 10-win three are now

assured of the supreme slots in the Pogo System finals.

Manila, which will represent the Philippines in the World Series in August in Kalamazoo, Michigan, whipped Bombol Bruins, 4-0, to stake No. 2 dot. Bombol Bruins, also off to the Ribbland, Maryland World Series, secured the No. 4 slot.

'Who cares about Rodman?'

IN HUDDLE



Butch Geli

UNTIL US HOOPERS as a complain about his P3,500 monthly allowance, while the Philippine Sports Commission dropped more than three months ago, I was under the impression that the 75-year-old former Olympian was comfortable well off.

I was wrong. Mr. Olympian told me that he and his colleagues—some of them bedridden and debilitated—firmly needed the pension, though paltry.

"They said the OC budget was drastically cut, that's why the pension for the Olympic and Asian Games medalists was shot out. From what I know, the budget for the pensions comes from the Bagay Olympian Ariman-ation and Training Corp.), which undertook to subsidize the PSC. Could you ask PSC chairman Butch Ramirez (on our behalf), please?" implored the former Olympian.

I have been trying to track Mr. Ramirez through calls and texts asking for number given some by a colleague, but to no avail.

* * *

Shocking to see Ateo on the Dodgers in last Wednesday's column, because Ateo spent his entire Dodgers career with the Reds to relate his personal experience with Pinch hitter and Ateo. Incidentally, I was told by colleagues (and during the "Bad Boy Year" press conference held at The Guesthouse in Cubao, Quezon City, Dennis Rodman's bodyguard reportedly warned the members of the media and warned each one of them, don't ask Dennis questions about his father. He said the pressures would be terminated if anybody did.

Well, one broadcaster had the guts to tell the bodyguard that he had no right to dictate what the Filipino media should ask. The broadcaster then proceeded to ask Dennis about his father.

Dennis answered, then stood up and walked out.

Here's Dennis Evan's letter:

Madam Butch:

Then call me Filip.

I'm ordering, of course, to Philadelphia, Dennis Rodman's estranged father.

We now know that the bronzer actually beat Rodman in the career rebounds department. Ateo finished with 8,029 career rebounds to Rodman's 6,683.

Rodman actually broke his leg in a motorcycle accident. I'm not sure whether he has bothered 20 children, but one thing is sure: he seldom family planning. Only prolific.

I interviewed him at the last he visited. The last time he visited with Dennis.

Does that be dreamed of pumping up things with Dennis.

Mind you, the Bad Boy Tour wasn't the first time Rodman had tried to seek an audience with his son. He even went to a child's birthday party for some rumbles a relative of Steven.

Now, did you know that another son named Philander II actually was active in the PBL. At 5-foot-9, Philander II, or Pepot to friends, was an instant sensation for the team Alabang Country Club.

But he was too small to be a forward, too slow to be a point guard. Still, he was able to see action in the 1994 PBL Master Cup.

Pepot never made it to a PBL Grabe event, but he managed to land in the news.

Once he was arrested for driving a Toyota call down Pepot who said he was being detained in a Makati City police station.

Hmmm. So was caught writing for in the control panel of the divorce that involved Dennis's parents.

I guess all businessmen are part and parcel of the Rodman bloodline. Years after I heard, Imelda Rodman treated the Manila City hosts of the Bad Boy Tour with dinner. Even in Manila, Imelda was hardly approachable to rated basketball fans.

"Who cares?"

Capitol pair gains final 4

By Marang B. Castillo

SOMEWHERE BEHIND ARGAN—CAPITOL University of Cagayan de Oro claimed another four-weight for yesterday and advanced to the semi's Final Four of the Little Nestea Beach Volley championship here.

The duo of Alain left to the volleyball pair of Orphea Cidilla and Ana Cristy Cagalan, 21-22, 21-17, 21-17, to advance to the championship in Bonifacio Stadium in the semi-finals via the knockout after a 25-20 victory over University of San Jose-Recoletos.

Cagalan 18 next tangles with Adamson, another side literally stuck up of big, powerful players, for a seat in the title game after the Falcons evaded past University of San Carlos, 25-13, in a quarterfinal match this Lunes early 14 minutes.

Final Four play is set in the morning today with the Maests, the reigning NCAA champions tackling Mindanao State U.

MSU took out tournament favorite and 2002 champion Foundation U, 25-20, in one of the most semi-final matches on Day 3.

Shawn working 31, Bevildis, assisted by Jenley Pereras and Pia de Castro, did not qualify as its group's top story and needed to win an extra game in the knockout bracket yesterday morning before seeing their campaign taken away, 15-8.

"That's how the sport is," said Bevosa in Filipino. "Breaks can really decide the outcome of beach volleyball games."

Ai Bevildis lost in alternate match Thursday 25-15. The school is actually two positions to mail a golden double after the Lady Maests advanced to the semifinals by

UNIVERSITY of San Agustin's Norissa Bacsinta hits via the two sands of Boracay to remove a placement shot against the Adamson U varsities. San Agustin prevailed, 25-22. ARNEL SARMIENTO

crushing University of Mindanao-Davao, 25-16, in last 15 minutes.

University of Southern Philippines sealed a semifinal clash with the Lady Falcons after outmuscling the University of the Visayas, 25-22.

UNAIDS lady bets and University of San Agustin made up the other semifinal pairing after taking a 25-14 and 25-22 duo's down over University of Mindanao-Davao and the Lady Falcons, respectively.

Cidilla and Cagalan ended by as many as three points early, but the rookies shrugged along, finally gaining momentum and the upper hand at 16-17.

The tournament is sponsored by Sprouts, MTV, Power Shot, Hey Dude, Wilson, Cobi, Pacific, Salvomen, 3-Mail, Villa De Oro, Clubfits, Schering-Plough Copperwire, Crystal Sand Resort, Club Oscillators, Bonaza Gold Cosmic Grit, Sunray Bathhouse, ABS-CBN Foundation, Namnlua by El Fernando, La Salud of Boracay and La Salle Green Hills.

Iligan scuttles Pangasinan five

ILIGAN CITY—THE ILIGAN CHEMISTRY ignited the team of Pangasinan thumbed Iligan's southern swing by scoring a 79-68 victory Tuesday in the 2006 Dawsons Brandy/NBC National Basketball Championship at the MSU-IIT gymnasium.

Ronie Matias and playmaker Marlon Ravena sparkled as the Chemistry posted their fifth win in eight games as to ally Manila Candoan for second spot in the tournament sponsored by Bonanza, Solpecinlanes, Nissan's Xyting Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firefly Lighting, Mobiline and Power Glucose.

Matias was player of the game honors with 13 points and eight rebounds.

STANDINGS

	W	L
North Division		
Nautical Aztecs	4	2
Bataan Tagaytay	4	2
Cebu Tagaytay	3	2
Spring P'Tagaytay	2	3
Pangasinan	1	4
Laguna U. Pista	0	5
South Division		
Cagayan Valley	4	0
Negros Occidental	3	1
North Cotabato	3	1
Zamboanga	2	3
Valencia	1	3
Iloilo Warriors	1	4

The Firefly Lightning backed Crusaders of Marlon Ravena's 19 made up an offense what they backed in rebounding to build all the taller Pangasinanians of Eligio Hermann Bergonia and team manager Rolando Ilo.

Tim scores:

ILIGAN 79—Ravena 19, Matias 17, Antonio 11, Bautista 10, Ilo 8, Sagun 8, Tumaing 5, Quimada 4, Garcia 3, Cagunan 3, Sandoval 2, Dimaculangan 2, Gaspi 2

PANGASINAN 68—Ruiz 21, Ka Manar 16, Lucas 11, Del Rosario 7, Aguirre 6, Zapata 4, Mercado 2, Ramirez 1, Tumaliuan 1, Vergara 0, Ventura 0, Tan 0. Quarters: 20-16, 40-37, 57-52, 79-68

San Beda shoots for Cup sweep

GAMES TODAY / San Juan gym
2 p.m.—San Beda vs La Salle (Bg)
4 p.m.—Perpetual Help vs San Sebastian (High School)

THIS IS FOR ALL THE MARBLES.

San Beda's Red Lions fill them and Red Cubs shoot for both crowns today in the finales Yuuichiro Flying V Home-grown Cup at the San Juan gym.

Aiming to sweep the Red Lions, powered by Sonny Manzanal and BIT Bicerra, is the alumni final at 2 p.m. are the La Salle Green Archers.

Meanwhile, the Red Cubs collide with the Arellano Eagles for the high school finale at 4 p.m. after the Eaglets shocked La Salle to two titles in a playoff, 20-17.

League commissioner Virgil Villaverde checked sponsors led by Shell and Shoe and Jackers Seafood, Bonanza, Steel, Infinite Circle, Bank of Commerce, Bance de Oro, PBCom, Gerry's Grill, 8-24, Security Bank and Milkcom among them.

Villaverde is also praised the support of Red Cubs Rudy Villaverdecito.

Tim scores:

SAN BEDA 89—Rivera 27, Austria 8, Quiñahan 8, Salvacion 12, Cardona 10, A. Calaycay 2, Lalu 1, Lacsamana 9, Laqueste, Asombrado 1, Dumapias 6

LA SALLE 87—Baltazar 30, Fortunato 8, Mayo 8, Joaquin, Lorenzo 6, Ilao 6, Ilao-Guzman 6, Suarez 6. Quarters: 15-14, 39-38, 61-61, 89-87

MisOr cagers take opener

GINGOAG, SANTOS CITY—POINT GUARD Jhanel Tagupa lifted Provo Pharma-Misor's past, literally, to send Pacifico Christian, 69-67, for a 1-0 lead Thursday in their best-of-three Mindanao Division semifinal series of the NB Kenefic Pacific Mindanao Visayas Basketball Association (MBVA) First Conference in the General Santos City gym.

Tagupa exploded for eight points in a crushing 11-3 run that broke the game wide open with 1:33 to play, 62-49. 14- capped Provo Pharma's onslaught with a triple, much to the delight of team owner and MBA chair Gov. Oscar Moreno who was in attendance.

Provo Pharma raced to a 22-14 edge after the first period behind the 12 points of rookie Jessie Lumantas.

But Misor's 33-point output shattered the MBVA record but found problem on a game previously held by West Negros College.

Pacifico team owner and leading supporter Murray Bergston played to his second game, scoring the team's first basket via a side jumper at the 6 minute mark.

Petron volley at Baywalk

THE MANILA BULLETIN CHASE ALIVE WITH A gorgeous beach volleyball fiesta scrolling four staff, and Revenge of Elizabeth to accompanying the top side action on the sandcourt when the 2nd leg of the 2006 Petron Spikers Beach Volleyball Tour turned extended Friday. Besides Spikers' Queen's Cup victorious team the ceremonial toss of the two-day volleyball battle, backed by Petron with support from Asian College of Business and Technology (ACBT), Sportsfun (official uniform), Lifeline (official ball) and Motion and Fitness Magazine. Leading the 16 amateur, 16 team court are national team pool member Rachanda Rivera and the Philippine Billboard Business Administration standout Nadia.

De Guzman, Ikeda score playoff wins

REGINA DE GUZMAN AND PEL-ISMAEDES Chihiro Ikeda edged separate opponents in sudden-death playoff to take their respective divisions in the one-venue fifth leg of the Samsung Hanjaff Tour at Pluck Wack.

De Guzman nailed the nine hole, the par-5 300, to beat Sheldon Gem for the 50th Class A plum while Ikeda turned back Princess Bonevista Sabio for the gold Class B crown.

De Guzman, Samsung Tour 2nd and Korean Skin Fit Asia Tour Class A1 topped their opponent by a mere stroke in the tourney that marked the return of Pluck Wack as host of the jumpoff summer circuit.

Calamba rallied from nine strokes down with a 71 in the final round to outscore Chan Ka-sung by a stroke to the crown launched by Samsung and Philippine Airlines. Following: Tibiri, Mizuno, La Jolla, Taylor Made, Play, Asahi Shaft, Undrest, MGU Air Liquid, Inoyama Golf and Michael Kay are the other sponsors.

STANDINGS

	W	L
Visayas Division		
M. Cruz-Bee-Cebu	7	0
Cebu Landmaster	4	3
Manicani Travers	3	4
Toyota-Iloilo	1	5
West Negros	0	4
Mindanao Division		
Southern Int. 1 lead Region City 1, Mr. Cebu Cebu Queen 1, Mr. 2 Pacific Auction 2, No. 3 Physio Pharma MBVA 1		
GAME TODAY		
1:30 p.m.—MBVA vs Cebu Landmaster Queen		

Sy quickest in practice; Peña 2nd

TYSON Sy heads the AFI practice race at the Batangas Racing Circuit yesterday.

MAGARI MANGOS—TYSON SY AND GIDO PEÑA CONTINUE TO SHOW the way in practice runs Friday, raising hopes a Filipino driver would score a big victory in the opening round of the 2006 Asian Formula Three series Saturday at the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

Pen the second-straight day, Sy 10, logged the fastest lap time of one minute 28. 052 at the 3.4-kilometer circuit, with Peña, of Team Goddard, not far behind at 1.:00.:06.

The rest of the drivers, including the foreign contingent, were one lap behind going into the qualifying series Saturday morning that will determine the grid positions for the opening round later in the afternoon.

British James Winslow of JA Motorsports was third fastest in the practice runs with a time of 1.:29.:863, followed by Indonesia's Ali Anthony of Asian Racing (1.:30.:936). Spaniard's Moreno Borjiquito (1.:29.:603), British Dillon Rudd also of JA Motorsports (1.:29.:759), last year's runner-up Irishman John O'Hara of Asian Racing (1.:29.:860), Team Indonesia's Jovens Fifi Bagoes Hermanto (1.:32.:18) and brother Emilio Hermanto (1.:32.:511).

Team Goddard's Michele Beniguet ran into his last snag in 1972 after dominating last year's karting series, clocked 1:32.597 while fellow Italy driver Gaby de Architessi of Speedbirds Asia, another newcomer, clocked 1:34.:963. JP Yuseni of Yuseni Racing finished lagged 1:.:00.:577.

Another Filipino, 2005 champ Jepoi Marcos, failed to join the race in morning practice runs, his car said to the pit being repaired for mechanics after it was hit in practice by Jackson on Thursday.

Although the races are fast shaping up to be a duel between the Pinoy young guns, Peña said he expects the other drivers to push harder, especially during the qualifying session of the series backed by PLDT myDSL. PLDT MyPAD, Telefonica Trio, Lima City Hotel, Green Spark Plugs, Big Glen Biofuels, Suzuki, Hey Infrared Wave Pad, Yuseni Racing School and Monteno.

Highlights of the opening round will be shown on Sunday from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The next two rounds Sunday will be broadcast live. Racing enthusiasts can log on to www.asiaf3.net for updates.

"I said Yoson are really close but I'm quite shocked why the other drivers are a little far off" said Peña, who clocked the fastest lap time of 1:28.4 to practice runs later in the afternoon.

"But you'll never know. I think they'll come out fast later and close this gap. I think I can push harder."

All cars will run with new rims for the qualifying run and the should remember lose faster times, with the fourth overall bar pool and winner of two rounds in Indonesia, confident he can still improve his clocking.

"Even so, this struggling dragonslayer may come as mga unusual no. labor," said Sy, adding he would aim for at least second on the starting grid.

Rhinelow third overall last year, is also confident he would come up with better times, especially in the qualifying session.

Michele takes challenge of F3 racing

BENIGANER

THE BELGIAN DRIVER MICHELE... Michele and Mark—are back following their fruitful karting stint in Italy and will try their driving mettle with cars.

Michele, the Asian Karting Open, takes the challenge of driving a formula car against veteran driver Peña in the 2006 Asian Formula 3 Driving all today at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas.

Mark, on the other hand, gets his hands on a fast race car so he debuts in the Touring Car Championship after competing in the Ford Lynx Cup last year.

Driving low formula cars in the past race then, Michele enjoyed everyone, including the veteran F3 drivers, as she started a quite fast average lap time of 1:30.06.

Beniguener, who's backed up by the Department of Tourism, Fiesta, Accel, Inskit Wine, Credit Cyte, Dolsky, City Kart Karting, and Luzon Rentals Backer F1 martial Services, will be running alongside Dado Peña for Team Goddard.

"That was so inspiring and I just couldn't wait to get into the actual race," said Michele, who called another Italian on her rig "is being appointed as our new will Ambassador of Wallon and Sports owned by the Department of Tourism.

She's under the tutelage of former AF3 champ Mark Goddard.

European Union Cup up

THREE CLASSY IMPORTS HAVE two back-to-back heads head the field of challengers for the annual Shangrila Cebu Cup, a featured cup race marking the celebrations of Europe Month in the Philippines today at the Santa Ana Park.

Spearheaded by the European Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines and the European Commission, the 1,500-meter event will stake P200,000 in guaranteed prize money to the winner sponsored by Philippine Racing Club Inc.

Competing are reigning Colombia Smoos (SG), Power Bully (Sun) and Good Catching (Aun), as well as local favorite Jester Land and defending cup champion Hobbit. Good Landing (Sun), racing under the banner of businessman sportsman Antonio Pryor, looms as the early favorite.

Benitez tops Shell karting

BENITEZ

YOUNG JAN BENITEZ of Jen Karting upmarked past his rivals in the kosmodrill to top the Junior ROK class in the second leg of the 2006 ShellCalt Superkarting Series recently at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The 13-year-old Ben... his rivals a decisive cru... session to overtake John... eleven approaching the finish line and clock 1:49.9820, just 0.259 second ahead of Moreno.

"I just kept that strong fighting spirit throughout the race, I never really thought I could win," said Benitez. "But when I got that close to John (Moreno), I knew I could overtake him."

"He has improved a lot," said Elmer Cerpio, the Jet Karting head coach. "Attitude wise, he's more matured, more fiery."

It was a classy score from behind triumph as Benitez, backed by Mega Botanico Corp., Henry Sy Jr. of SM companies and Willy Ocier of Pacific Online Systems Corp. and Bello Corp., was seconds place going to the third lap of the race.

Benitez moved up to third place on the 6th lap, while race polesitter John Tandoc got pulled out of the running following a collision with the race, Benitez seized the opportunity and made time to blaze on the final lap.

Moreno held on to the pole after the last corner going to the finish line, but Benitez pulled the crucial maneuver to complete his conquest.

SPORTSWATCH

Tuksan derby at Baliuag

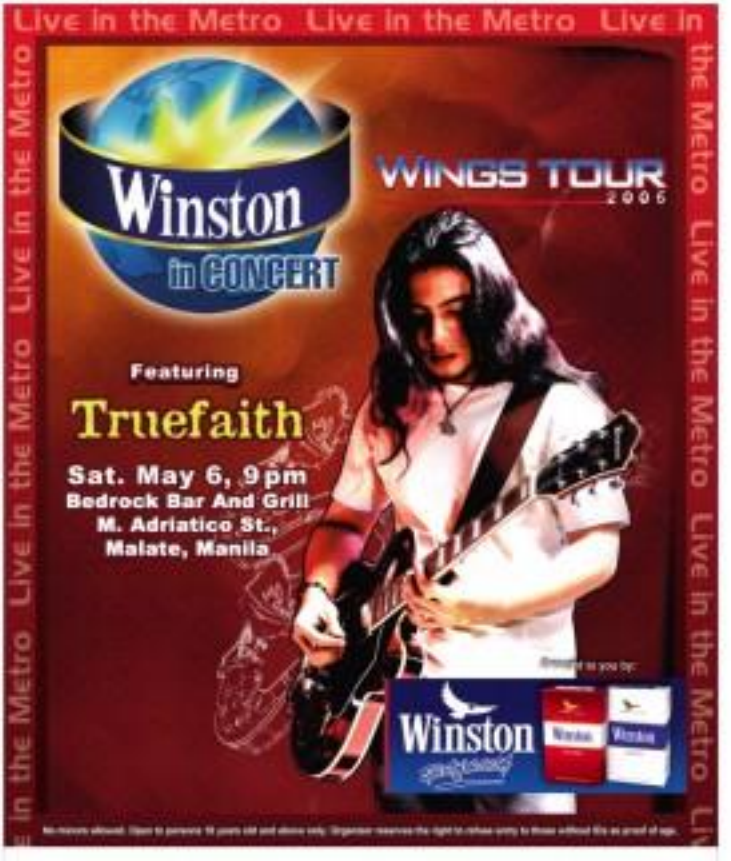
THE CHAMPIONSHIP POLOS OF POLO CLUB INC. Corinth's Tuksan 10-unit derby, which attracted a big field of 200 entries, starts today with more than 100 light-entries. Main sponsors are Lakson Corp Inc. and Thunderbird Enterprise. Host Bobo Lapid said that 10-day's fullest who champion will drive home a brand new Toyota Innova. SM Philippines of Robinson DMP 10, after receiving Honda Innova in last month's Las Piñas derby, is among the qualifiers today, with two points and may win another Innova. For tickets, call 84-0777, 893-9000 and 892-9812.

Makati 6-cocker resumes

MAKATI COLISEUM'S BLOCKBUSTER COCKFEST, the 22.1-meter, Gamecon Caballeros 6-cock derby, resumes at 2 p.m. today with more than 100 cocksmen entering. The event is the fifth and final round of elimination of the derby organized by 6-Hitter Derby Inc. The championship rounds are scheduled on May 12 and 13. Eliminated within dominated last Thursday's elimination. Coming from semi-main came Dexter Sagmaun (Hard Luck), 2-to-1 knock (Marcenito), without Ting of Dexter City (Dexter Gold), Lotte Cruz (Cru) and Chito Santos of Pampanga (Mayo Knee Makati). Pre-entries are P 5k-10,000, Pesty Sabel and William Co.

Lagos, Marsa join SJC tilt

POPES AT GREECE'S MAN SORRY LAGUNA RED 2006 World Stadium Cup champion Jing Marcos are among the early hosts who confirmed their participation in the SJC19 Cock International Derby slated June 6, 7 and 8 at San Juan Coliseum. Sagmaun Complex on 3000 in the opener. Lagos, in partnership with Dexter Marcos, recently won the Super Big Event 1 cock derby. Lagos will bring in partner Grace Assembly of Assembly, Mission to the U.S. Secretary Yoon Mexico, who topped the 2006 World Stadium Cup first leg, will get support from Japanese partner Shinkansu Sangyuki at Sabong Hotel. Pre-entries P6 Pieces and guaranteed prize is 6% million not an entry fee of P10,000.



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SPORTS

Shaq fuels Heat surge

NJ Nets usher undermanned Pacers to exit

CHICAGO—MIAMI'S SHAquille O'Neal and New Jersey's Richard Jefferson each scored 30 points Thursday, sparking road triumphs that advanced their teams to a National Basketball Association playoff showdown.

O'Neal sank 13-of-24 shots, pulled down 10 rebounds, dished off his assists and blocked two shots in 38 minutes to lead the Miami Heat past the Chicago Bulls, 113-96.

"When I was in the game my eyes were looking for me," O'Neal said. "I was getting the ball in the right spots from 3 miserable-to-opening shots and hit them."

Jefferson and Vince Carter, who scored 24 points, ignited the Nets past host Indiana, 96-90.

Second-seed Miami and third-seed New Jersey each won their best-of-seven opening-round series four games to two and booked an Eastern Conference semifinal matchup. The Nets went 3-1 against the Heat during the season.

"We're very confident," O'Neal said. "A lot of times we get into trouble we make a lot of silly mistakes. We play with a lot of energy. The games we are supposed to win we almost always win those games."

Jermaine O'Neal had Cleveland or Washington next in the other Eastern semifinal. The Cavaliers own a 3-2 edge on the Wizards, who close game one on Friday.

O'Neal turned back the clock to his Los Angeles Lakers days of dominating rivals with ease, the three-time NBA Finals Most Valuable Player sounding bad trouble to coax the Bulls.

"If I'm on the court and Eric Archer that's how it's going to be most of the time," O'Neal said. "Games two, three, four and five I was in foul trouble. Tonight I stayed on foul months so I could do what I do."

The Heat, known to all time prior NBA playoff games at Chicago, never trailed. They built a 16-9 lead late and had kept the Bulls to 22 percent first half shooting.

"We started the game extremely well," Heat coach Pat Riley said. "We weren't moving it more and we were scoring. They were missing a lot of shots. We came out and established ourselves. They seemed a little tight in the beginning."

Dwyane Wade scored 23 points and showed little signs of the bruised hip he suffered in Game 5. Udonis Haslem added 17 points and 14 boards for the Heat.

"Our coaches will have a great game plan put together," Wade said. "No matter where the games in the next series are played, at home or on the road they will be great games."

The Bulls pulled within 63-46 with 6:57 remaining but Haslem scored five points in a row and James Posey had a steal and layup to help seal victory.

Rick Hamett led Chicago with 23 points.

"It's very disappointing not to advance," Hamett said. "We had this series tied at 2-2, thought the most part we played acceptable of really tough games where we didn't play like ourselves."

In Indianapolis, Jason Kidd added eight points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists for the New while the Nets, who won the series opener on the road but dropped four of the next five, got a season-high 40 points by Anthony Johnson, Kidd's backup on New Jersey's 2002 and 2003 runner-up teams. AFP

• NBA on SOLAR SPORTS—Cleveland vs. Washington (5 a.m. tomorrow); Dallas vs. Golden State (7 a.m. tomorrow); Miami vs. Chicago (9 a.m. tomorrow); New Jersey vs. Indiana (11 a.m. tomorrow)

MIAMI Heat's Shaquille O'Neal highlights his huge playoff performance a with a slam dunk. The Heat advanced to the second round of the NBA playoffs after downing the Chicago Bulls five

THOMAS: Big cross o'quin

Suns burn Lakers, force deciding seventh game

LOS ANGELES—STEVE NASH SCORED 32 points and Tim Thomas hit a 3-pointer to force next time, lifting Phoenix over the Los Angeles Lakers 126-118 Thursday to level their Western Conference playoff series at three.

Seconds from elimination, the Suns rallied to make a 30-point performance from Kobe Bryant to force a decider Saturday in Phoenix. The Suns can become only the eighth NBA team to win a best-of-seven series after trailing 3-1.

"We hung in there. We've gone through a lot of adversity," Nash said. "We hung in and kept playing. We just made with what got us here."

Thomas, coming off back-to-back 3-point misses, evened the game at 106-106 with a shot from beyond the arc with 6.3 seconds to play in the fourth quarter, following steps Nash made with the only foul-basket of the four three minutes.

"I called my 3," Nash said. "Timmy unhesitatingly his name and made a big shot."

"I thought to myself, 'If I get my hands on it, I'm going to hit it for it,'" said Thomas. "I was all over him when I was taking shots."

The Suns, who forced 20 Lakers turnovers, shot 7-of-8 from the field to open the extra session and carried a 120-111 lead with 55 seconds remaining on a Thomas 3-pointer and a Boris Diaw alley-oop pass for a Shawn Marion dunk.

Bryant added two late 3-pointers for a career playoff high and his seventh for point of the season, but it was not enough to catch the Suns.

Phoenix guard Raja Bell was serving a one-game suspension for swapping his arm around Bryant's neck in a takedown move that got him ejected from game five. He will be back to defend Bryant in the deciding game.

"We were able to play for the last of Raja Bell," said Suns coach Mike D'Antoni.

"We did this for Raja," Nash said.

The Lakers' next entrance will face the Los Angeles Clippers in the second round.

"We had it all done but crossing the T," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said. AFP

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FIRST SINCE '45

Wie makes men's cut

INCHEON, SOUTH KOREA—American 16-year-old Michelle Wie became the first woman to make the cut on the European tour event since 1945 when she fired a three-under 69 on Friday in the second round of the Asian Tour's SK Telecom Open.

The Hawaiian schoolgirl had been missing the make her first halfway cut in eight appearances against the men. The last woman to make the final two rounds of a senior men's event was Babe Zaharias at the 1945 Los Angeles Open.

Wie, who regularly hits her drives over 300 yards, missed the cut by one stroke at the Casino World Open in August but November after beginning the last two holes. Reuters

WIE: Funder. Reuters

Mayol underdog. . .

From page A21

Take of the Tape		
Mayol		Rivera
26	AGE	27
154 kilos	WEIGHT	156 lbs
180 cms	REACH	180 cms
5'4"	HEIGHT	5'3.5"
32.5 cms	FIST	33.6 cms
66 cms	CHEST	84 cms

official weigh-in to dispel allegations that he had to drastically cut down on food in order to make the 105 lbs limit.

Mayol also registered a better pulse rate, 46 bpm against 77 for the 27-year-old champion. But the dialog underscored punching power from Mendoza (23) is expected to have his hands full against Ilyenes (2-1-, 6 KOs) who suffered his first defeat after dislocating a shoulder in a 6th bout.

Ilyenes, who fanned a thicker chest and had scored all-around build, was described by Mayol, who had watched the champion from ringside station, as a very aggressive counterpuncher.

When Ilyenes supervisors wondered if he was not intimidated by the champion's solid build, Mayol quipped through interpreter Kenko Tokuno, a SF graduate, that he was not sympathy for a body-building stance/strength.

"I'm not in the ring to show off my muscles," said Mayol, who added that he had sparred over a hundred rounds, before Mendoza and here, to enhance championship peak.

He said he, indeed, used to have a tough time making the 105-lb. limit before. However, he surprised everybody, including himself, after he did not suffer any trouble, both in diet and training, for his first mandatory 8-world crown.

The title bout is scheduled at 8:30 p.m. (7:30 p.m. in Manila) over Solar Sports and RPN-9.

Defending OPBF bantamweight champion Malcolm Tolentino fights challenger Tanee Ilyenes of Japan in the main undercard.

Ilyenes did acknowledge that Mayol, a right-hander, has a strong left hand.

"I know my opponent is strong and good but I'm ready to do my best," said Ilyenes, who is making a mandatory defense, through an interpreter.

Manny Pacquiao, crowned a pfam-poker notwithstanding his 2nd round KO win over Mexican Jorge Eliecer Julio last night although uncontrived reports said the SP boxing superstar missed his flight from Gentlan to Manila.

Editor Nestor U. Torre
Associate Editor Rito P. Asilo

SATURDAY Special

Superman's seminal story told anew

By Nestor U. Torre

THE FANTASY CRAZE IN SHOW BUSINESS IS EVIDENT NOT JUST locally, but on international screens as well. A host of movie superheroes is about to zap and zoom into movie theaters all over the world, led by one of the most iconic superheroes of them all, Superman.

The latest wave of movies about Clark Kent and his super-alter ego began in 1978, with the prophet-horse-pleasing the quintessential Man of Steel. Next came "Superman 2"in 1980, "Superman 3" in 1983 and "Superman 4" in 1987, all with Reeve upholding before his iconic admirers cruelly-killed/slain and transformed him into a real life hero in his own right.

That year, the Man of Steel's seminal story is told anew, in "Superman Returns," with a fresh, new hunk, Brandon Routh, climbing the prized title role—but only after a very long search.

NOLITH. Stars in edgier and more mordant role about the iconic Man of Steel.

Plum role

Other actors wondered for the plum role include Brendan Fraser, Ashton Kutcher, Josh Hartnett, Paul Walker, Jeanne Garofalo, Jerry O'Connell and David Boreanaz!

What does the new "Superman" film offer that past predecessors haven't? It's definitely a movie for today's viewers, edgier and more mordant than usual, without giving up the popular film franchise's ability to thrill and surprise.

This time around, Kal-El (Superman's) returns from a visit to his home planet of Krypton, to find out if he was the only survivor after the planet's destruction. He is reunited with his adoptive mother (Eva Marie Saint) and learns that his beloved Lois Lane (Kate Bosworth) has had a child by another man (James Marsden).

At the same time, his old nemesis, Lex Luthor (Kevin Spacey), has been released from jail and vows to crush him once and for all. Of course, Superman relies on to cooperate, not instead rescues the world from total destruction.

New nemeses

Has on Superman's heels come other superheroes in their own appropriately mega-spectacular persistence: "Spider-Man 3" has Toby Maguire facing new nemeses—Sandman, Hobgoblin and Venom.

Which more imminent is the showing of SUPERMAN'S [illegible]

"Gusto ko ng mutant powers sa phone ko!"

X-MEN
THE LAST STAND
MARVEL
Showing in theaters on May 24, 2006.

NOW SHOWING

Fish out of water

By Rito P. Asilo

"Aquamarine"
D: Elizabeth Allen
S: Emma Roberts, Joanna "JoJo" Levesque, Sara Paxton

LOVE IS A MYTH, OR SO THE INTER OF MERMAID AQUAMARINE (Sara Paxton) insists. After a violent storm, when the naive half-human, half-fish beauty is washed ashore in Florida—and into the lives of 13-year-old eighth graders Claire (Emma Roberts) and Hailey (JoJo)—the mermaid's life takes a serendipitous turn.

Claire and Hailey are spending the final days of summer daydreaming about Jonny Shepard, Raymond (Jake McDorman), and drooling the muscles of Hailey's family ex-Australian.

But, the toothsome twosome sees a flicker of light at the end of the tunnel when Aqua seeks their help to accomplish her "mission impossible": To prove that love exists ... in three days!

Wishes

The lowercase assistance comes at a price, however. You see, in the world according to Aquamarine, wishes are granted to those who help work demands in flatties. For Aqua, however, the stakes are higher: her head has been promised to a spoiled, rich mermaid she doesn't love. If she gets Raymond to fall in love with her, she'll be rich and from a her worst nightmare.

Elizabeth Allen's light and breezy film, based on Alice Hoffman's novel, is predictable, but it doesn't pretend to be more than the featherweight fluff it is. Happily, its young protagonists, Roberts and Levesque, exude a sprightly charm and watchful exuberance that lend bankable joy to a mermaid's plight!

LEVESQUE AND ROBERTS. Exude sprightly charm and youthful exuberance.

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Juno Henares stars in sex comedy

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The Shang Cineplex Gift Certificate

By Edmund L. Sicam

JUNO HENARES: Has recommend with her theater buddies

AS VICE PRESIDENT for programming of Sky Cable, Juno Henares has her hands full organizing and overseeing with various providers, coordinating with talent managers and handling Sky's PR requirements. Juno's first love, however, is acting, so despite her busy schedule, she has agreed to appear in Jeyk's "Two and Two Make Sex" at Dulcinea in Makati.

Affair

Juno plays Ruth, writer of a "Dear Abby" type column. Her advice is sought by almost-30 Clare, who fears her husband, George, is having an affair with sweet-something Jane, who seems to be involved with Nick.

With her demanding job and as the wife of Teodel Chaldan and mother of their children, Juno realized that she could not be as involved with show business as she was in the '80s.

But she reconsidered when her theater buddies asked to join the Tanauan production of "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe." It would take several years before the would stage another play, this time a Repertory children's theater production, "The Emperor's New Clothes," which ran in December 2005.

Negotiations

Juno says her theater background has helped her a lot in her present job, especially when it involves negotiations. Acting has given her the confidence to deal with different personalities and cultures.

Juno is enjoying her responsible job but admits she misses the stage. That's why, when her schedule permits, she accepts acting assignments like "Two and Two Make Sex."

Her only frustration as a performer is acting for the movies, where actors get a record of their body of work. "You can see how you have grown, something that is not available in theater," she says. (Call BOXOFFICE at 891-9999.)

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MOVIE GUIDE

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MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Superman's seminal story told anew

From page A2

"X-Men: The Last Stand," the third installment in the popular film series about a platoon of do-good-or "super-freaks."

"The Last Stand" reconvenes all of the series' key cast members, who will say goodbye to the profitable film franchise with this final marvel-mania.

"Poderosa" is a spin-off from the hit "X-Men" franchise, with Hugh Jackman playing the title character.

The "My Super Ex-Girlfriend," a comedy that casts the superhero ethos on its ear, with Uma Thurman using her witch-like powers to avenge herself on the man who broke her heart.

And, in "Ultraviolet," Milla Jovovich is cast as a stylized vampire who looks for kids in order to use their super-energies!

Takashi Shimizu . . .

From page A1-4

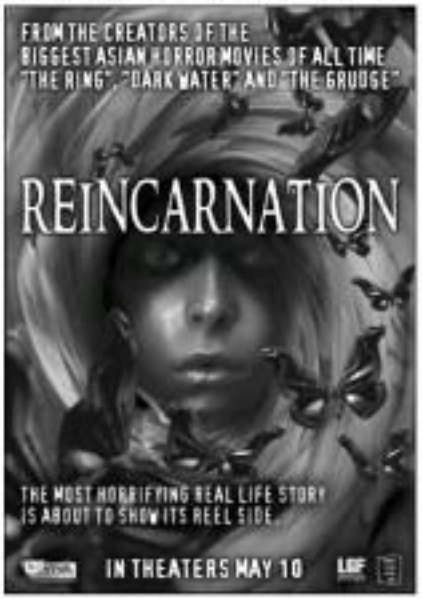
information on the scares and unreal chat inspired "The Ghi Mo. o Grab" in a one-hour special, "Ghi Mori Unclassified," at 9 p.m. on May 8, encoring at 10 p.m. on May 14.

Movies on TV

On HBO, May 6 at 7:30 p.m., "New Jack City." May 7 at 6:30 a.m., "Any Which Way You Can." May 8 at 10:55 p.m., "New York Minute." May 9 at 6 a.m., "Mrs. Doubtfire."

On Cinemax, May 6 at 2:25 p.m., "Ordinary Decent Criminal." May 7 at 10:30 p.m., "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind." May 8 at 6 p.m., "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl." May 9 at 3:50 p.m., "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town."

HASSAN Source: "Paradise."



Takashi Shimizu unveils latest shocker

AFTER HIT ASIAN HORROR MOVIES LIKE "The Ring" and "The Grudge" scares director Takashi Shimizu's latest shocker, "Reincarnation."

It starts with a report that tells viewers that a director is making a film about a 1970 murder spree in a Tokyo hotel. The jet-set critics, a producer, some naked and fulfilled late-night guests, and his daughter—all the while revealing his catch of fate(ful) on screen-video.

MONTAGE

Before Shimizu finishes auditions for and churches the daughter's role. But, she is terrified when she lost a recent and mysterious the 1970 murders as if they're happening somewhere.

She also finds the camcorder, lost its footage previously, and discovers the monster behind her nightmares. She ends up meeting him she, too, will suffer the same fate. "Reincarnation" opens May 10.

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"REINCARNATION" Horror caught on camcorder.

On Nickelodeon

On May 14, Nickelodeon presents a two-hour special starring Hitchers' Day-themed episodes of their favorites like "Jimmy Neutron," "The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron," "The Fairly Odd Parents" and "SpongeBob SquarePants."

Watch out also for new episodes of "Avatar: The Legend of Aang," at 6:30 p.m. on May 19.

"Unfabulous" at 7:30 p.m. on May 13 promises you to join 14-year-old Addie Singer in the sudden relationship issues like jealousy, keeping her friends together, and breaking up. For more exciting highlights, log on to www.nickpal.com.

'Poseidon' premiere

The international gala premiere of "Poseidon" is within reach in the Shangri-La complex. Directed by Wolfgang Petersen, the film stars Josh Lucas, Kurt Russell, Richard Dreyfuss, Emmy Rossum, Jimmy Bennett and Mike Vogel.

10 Most Popular Asian Artists

At 1 p.m. today, Channel [illegible] features the 10 Most Popular Asian Artists. On May 12, the focus is on Jacky Cheung, Sheila Majid, Jay Chou, Jun Hasegawa, Stellar Kim, Jeon Ji-hyun, Richard Ho, Rain, Emmy Rossum, Juliette Binoche and Mike Hegel.

'Da Vinci Declassified'

The Discovery Channel reveals new [illegible]

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GMA

Been there, seen that

By Rashad Tiare

IF YOU'RE UNDER SIX YEARS OLD, you'll probably enjoy Disney's UGGnimated feature, "The Wild." If you're the parent grown-up who's taking the kids to see it, mmm, however, you'll probably enjoy the fact that this one runs for a thankfully brief one hour and 22 minutes. It's long enough to make you feel cuddly, but not [illegible].

It's not that the movie doesn't grow on you eventually—visually at least it's quite impressive, and there's enough action in the story to keep eager-eyed youngsters riveted. Unfortunately, this same story also happens to sound like "Madagascar" (DreamWorks).

Natives

The story in "The Wild" set again New York zoo animals who venture out into the real, mean urban jungle in pursuit of one of their co-inmates. There's cheetah (voiced in a sex journey, and hard on a lady, medium place where the natives are a little strange. Of course, the film's lone scene-stealer didn't second guess encouraging from "Madagascar's" Gary although it's just in a bit of "Finding Nemo" and "The Lion King."

Here's how it goes: famous (Greta Gerwig) is one of the stars in the zoo. She cub Sora (Greg Cipes) gets locked inside a box destined to be shipped to Africa and hilarious—with the help of friends Benny the squirrel (Jim Belushi), Bridget the giraffe (Antonia Gwynhil), Larry the [illegible] (Richard Riehl) and Sigrid the koala (Eddie Izzard)—goes on to him.

Wilderness

When they get to Africa, they find out that they have to contend with a lot of wilderness led by a disgusted Kate Hudson (Samuel L. Jackson's character's step-bring at the bottom of the food chain and gets the top-ranked—a deft to prefer lamebrainedness that involves then killing the top predators, bear. Also, there's a ruthless snake that's going to erupt.

Because only the lion in the fallow was doing ala "Lion King" and "Finding Nemo." Ryan has a real big problem and he feels that he still serves free up to his father's expectation as a champion roar-er. Instead, what's forever crippling his son sees his emphasis as the wild, has a few secrets of his own.

The fallow was doing may be a cliché, but it can still be heartwarming. Unfortunately, here it ends up being little and schmaltzy. It's the whole motivational theme to prevent that we see problem to doing the same thing over and over again as long as it's profitable.

Odd couple

As for the human, there isn't much of it. The squirrel is in love with the giraffe, but that odd-couple relationship is funny only in the beginning. The annoyance is sort of spaced out, but he doesn't have any meaning spaced out here. The koala, who strangely enough is has a British accent instead of [illegible] is sometimes droll, but not enough to compensate for yesterday's [illegible].

If there's anything here worth noting, it would be the photo-realism they put into the animation. Instead's Fur, for example, has more than 60 million separate hair follicles. Too bad it takes more than realistic hair to make a good movie.

SATURDAY Special

Angelina Jolie and George Clooney pay it forward

By Nestor U. Torre

THESE DAYS, ANGELINA JOLIE IS VERY much in the news because she's about to give birth to her love-child with Brad Pitt. Yes, the big women's hit couple, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, have upstaged Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes as the show biz world's most visible and exciting couples. "Tomkat" are now proud parents, while "Brangelina" are still to give birth, so all eyes are on them.

Concerned individual

But last year, Academy Angelina easily be "tattooed" with such superficial and shell "tutsal movie" sophistication. At the height of her pregnancy was awake ago, she flew to Namibia, not to her show biz capacity, but as a concerned individual who used her celebrity status to shed light and to focus the world's attention on the tragedy taking place in that benighted African nation.

Jolie knows she can't solve all of the country's problems, as she's forming an empowering its youth through education. A lot of Namibia's current ills happen because the population is too poor to afford the education it needs to know its rights and powers.

In a TV interview, Angelina sensibly observes, "It's the worst thing in the world for a father and mother not to be able to educate and prepare for their children. In fact, education can even save lives. In many as 700,000 people could be saved from dying from AIDS if they were better educated how to prevent it."

Goal

That's why the star has set as her goal to make education at least until the fifth grade available to every Namibian child by 2015. She urges viewers in other countries to donate what they can, pointing out that it takes only a few dollars to educate a child in Africa.

She says Americans be not doing enough for Namibia, revealing that Covid Britain pumps 300 percent of what the US does.

Why should Americans concern themselves with the troubles of a country so far away from them? Angelina argues, "Don't just 'fix your home'—if the neighborhood around us falls apart, we're all done for."

Inspiring

It's refreshing and inspiring to see Angelina focusing her energies, not on her personal concerns, but on using her celebrity to help others. The whole world is going ga-ga over the fact that she's bearing Brady Brad's child, but she frankly couldn't care less about all the fuss and brother.

Why other celebrities be as productive as the are of late even use power to make the world cleaner, kinder place to live in.

Another celebrity who did recently that recently is George Clooney. He uses his screen rank him to the Sudan, which has its own festering crushes and social ills, and he's chosen to throw the spotlight on that country's huge AIDS problem.

May Angelina and George's tribe increase! Pinoy men, what are you doing to improve other people's lives and future prospects?

Marvin, Jennifer pursue their other passions

By Jocelyn Valle

AGUSTIN. Loves Japanese cuisine.

DO THE KNOW what stars do when they're smitten in front of the camera are at home taking a break? They pursue their other interests.

Marvin Agustin takes over the cooking at Sunday's La Salle the five-month-old relationship Sunday's La Salle that he screens. Yes, he can make delicious California maki and spicy tuna roll...with a purpose!

"Sa kapag-kiliti mo intapos, ito ang kapeak ng ingredients," he brags, adding that he learned to cook from his mother. He's also taken up a cooking course at the International School for Culinary Arts and Hotel Management.

Favorite food

"It's my all-time favorite food," says one of the heads of "I Love New York" about Japanese cuisine.

"Napakasarap, healthy at saka hindi nanay Auntie. And there are also discipline in preparing and cooking it, awesome!"

Has Marvin found the right balance between being an actor and a businessman?

"Haha, middle-to-other!" he shakes his head. "Hearing premieres night ng 'Kuwak' last year, 6:30 ang call time namin pero 7 p.m. na, pagmagsuri pa ako ng mahi. Pagtingin ko sa cell phone ko, si Shark Joey Reyes nagtext sana. Sabi ko, 'Pareng ne ako d'yan, bwal, maghahagas lang ako ng kamay.'"

Wig styling

Jennifer Sevilla, on the other hand, is able to incorporate her newfound passion for wig styling into her acting profession. "Sa si Yvonne," she gales, showing the hairpiece that she used to wear on the recently concluded season of "Now And Forever."

"Ito ilan...ano, ano ang tawag ko dito? Jag kwentohin, ang gusto nila kulot," she explains. "Every taping morning, they'd style my hair. Nakakapuyat ng husto. Pag matulog, madaling matanggal ang kulot nasa'yo the same time. Inside at out mostly. Minsan kinse. Pag wig, ready na."

Jennifer happily reports that most of the wigs that other actors wear on various TV shows come from Metrosight Incorporated, which sells hairpieces and visual merchandising items in Trinidad. She takes care of the ordering and marketing aspects of the company that her boyfriend Raymond Gotiangco put up in 2004.

Though she enjoys channeling her flair for fashion into her wigs, Jennifer still hopes to go back to designing clothes. Between 2000 and 2004, she designed gowns for friends while accepting orders for corporate uniforms and events for physical therapy students.

"Hinintay ko sana boutique sessions out of my goods. But my heart is really in acting," laments one of the industry's most gifted but underrated stars.

SEVILLA. Gifted but underrated star.

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Richard Merk revives Pinoy classics

By Remy M. Umerez

"KANILA," THE NEWLY RELEASED CD BY RICHARD Merk, is a collection of well-loved Filipino ditties and fondlements. What prompted Richard to produce it?

"When I watch old OPM movies on Cinema One, they never fail to include scenes where male stars sing love songs to their leading ladies. The Basket of Three Stars feature the songs and folk dances. The album is my tribute to our musical heritage. With that concept in mind, I decided to remake it a bit by jazzing up their interpretations," Richard explains.

HERE, Maestro is our trailblazer.

Album

Launched recently at Music Bistro is that, the album features "Hindi Ako Malilimot," "Ang Tanga Kong Puso," "Manila-ala Mo Kaya," "Sapagka't Kami'y Tao Lamang," "Buru," "Maalaalang" and "Kahapon Kita."

The songs' composers read like a who's who of the music industry: Ausejo Cardoz, George Canseco, Restituto Cayetano, Levi Celerio, Tony Mozart, Constancio de Guzman, Boots Unson and Leopoldo Silos.

The title track ("Manila") was composed by Hazel Cabungcan, who wrote it as a reminder of the 'civet tragedy.'

"Manila" is Richard's first OPM album and, though he gives the songs a jazzy beat, he treats them with respect.

Proceeds of the album will benefit victims of the St. Bernard tragedy through the Daughter Children's Foundation.

Mr. & Ms. honors moms

ALBERT AND LIEZL Martinez topbill the May issue of Mr. & Ms. They talk about life, love, and yes, Amelia Furones.

Mr. & Ms. considers celebrating its 30th anniversary by honoring those very special women in our lives—our moms.

Learn tips on how to cope with problematic child-rearing situations using the mind. Find out what celebrity mom has to say about their kids.

Gift ideas

Mr. & Ms. also offers gift ideas for mothers. There is an article on Angels and Ghosts and how one person uses the image of his dead mother.

Mr. & Ms. includes its paranormal duet with features from Jaime T. Linsuco, who informs readers on the difference between demonic possession and insanity.

On the other hand, writer Nina Ursal-Bartholomew traces her thoughts on the Odyssey of Sesh. Other features include pieces on Frances Glaria's "Sexual Violence in Pint Lives" and Maribel Ilustrisimo's thoughts on what is good and bad around. Ing Dee Miguel finds "The Four Agreements."

Movies

Read about the child hysterics of "U Mee," plus other movies showing this month.

Other important features: a heart doctor talks about menstrual problems, a look on the murder's dismembering water supply, how supposing smoking can improve the skin, and the noisy 98-piece circus list.

ALBERT and Liezl Martinez

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One good photo safari deserves another

STREET SMART

Mandy Yamamoto

THE MAGIC Sorcerers Batanes Photo Safari, Part II, is slated from May 21 to 24 via Asian Spirit.

Say Kabuang, one of the 10 islands where Ivatan culture is preserved, including the famous stone houses, unique headgear, and the crispy sweetness of kaval. There are lighthouses, and the Chawa Overlook in Mahatao looks out on the lapis lazuli splendor of the China Sea.

Old churches

Old churches and an abandoned naval station serve as added postcard subjects for photographers. The Fundacion Pastor in Abad Santos is truly artworks.

"Boulder Beach" is named for the smoothly polished rocks covering the entire stretch of sand. And the highlight of the Photo Safari is the idea of rolling hills in Varong where one can hike, watch and shoot the sunset!

Call 840-1357 or 896-3288 or email mandyamamoto@yahoo.com.

No fear of death

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

THE PERSON OR SOUL is eternal and nothing. Being eternal, there is no reason for the person to suffer even if the body dies. And yet, death is a dreaded thing for many people.

Although people may have heard that the soul is eternal, they have a great fear of death because it doesn't see many leaving but also entering ... somewhere else ...and they are not in control of what they will have next.

They also know that they face the consequences of their past actions. The price to pay depends on what they have done.

Suffering

The Supreme Father does not enjoy the suffering of His children; it makes Him very sad. Out of His compassion, He offers us opportunities to decide who loves not surrendered to strike. If one takes shelter in the bosom in the form of His Holy Names, the living entity begins to be purified of the sinful contamination from his previous activities.

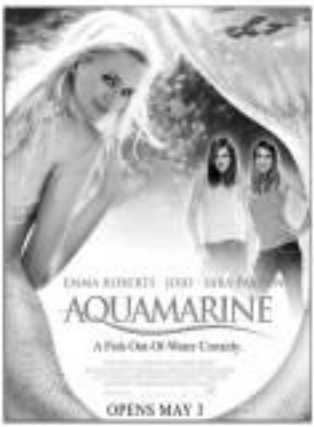
As the Holy Names wash the heart clean, our love for God begins to manifest itself. Developed by love for the Supreme, we have no fear of death because we have His full protection.

We have a choice in life. We can fear or surrender. Sober souls avoid fear the consequences, or take shelter in the Supreme and live in His eternal loving service.

Opposites

People sometimes say to realize, "If there is no evil, we won't appreciate good." This is the yin-yang philosophy. It is true that in the material world, you have opposites or dualities. But we must transcend duality.

In the spiritual world, only light are both good because he serves God. The Supreme Lord is wonderful and brings happiness and protection to the servants in all circumstances.



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BUSINESS

Lito Rayo ✦ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Nolasco

Inflation slowed down to 7.1% in April

Increase in consumer prices eases due to high farm yields

By Michelle V. Remo

CONSUMER PRICES grew 7.1 percent year-on-year in April, registering a slowdown from the 7.6 percent recorded a month ago, as lower price increments were recorded across all commodity groups, including food products.

The latest inflation rate was also more than a percentage point lower than the 8.5 percent recorded in April last year, according to the National Statistics Office.

The NSO reported that inflation for food products slowed down to 9.1 percent from 9.5 percent the previous month. The entire food, beverage and tobacco (FBT) group recorded a deceleration of inflation of 6.2 percent from the 6.4 percent in March.

Food products that posted slower inflation rates included rice (from 7.2 to 5.6 percent), fish (4.6 to 4.5 percent), meat (2.8 to 2.4 percent), eggs (4.9 to 3.9 percent), and dairy products (6.3 to 6 percent).

Prices of fruits and vegetables registered an increase of 0.3 percent, the same as the previous month's, while the cost of corn rose from 3 to 3.3 percent.

Victor Abola, economics professor from the University of Asia and the Pacific, said in an interview with the Inquirer that the deceleration of inflation had to do with the improved harvests in the farm sector that helped prop up supply and, thus, prices.

The agriculture sector grew 4.8 percent in the first quarter, reversing the 0.1 percent contraction recorded during the same period last year, and better than the government's 4.4 percent target.

BALANCING ACT

SSS gets GMA's support in EPCIB dispute

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo is supporting the position of the Social Security System to hold off the sale of its shares in Equitable-PCIBank, as proposed by the Government Service and Insurance System, until the Supreme Court has cleared up all legal questions on the disposition of the pension fund's shares.

"The President has said nothing about our decision ... [that] we can ride on developments on the position that we [can] sell our shares until the Supreme Court cases have been resolved," SSS president Corazon dela Paz said.

SM Investments Corp. (SM), which has a 34-percent stake in EPCIB, offered to buy the 29 percent share of SSS in EPCIB in December 2005 to firm up its control of the country's number three banks.

BIG BID

Shares end 4.21% up

SHARE PRICES SURGED one very sharply, adding 4.21 percent, for the biggest single-day gain in five years, on the back of continued strong foreign investor support, dealers said.

It was the fourth session in a row that the market has risen and the index rose two months at its highest since July 1998.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index jumped 88.86 points to 2,970.24, the day's high and the best finish since 2,488.82 on July 22, 1998.

Volume was 1.04 billion shares worth P4.26 billion (881.2 million), The broader all-shares index ended up 44.87 points at 1,976.72. Gainers led decliners 69 to 42, with 30 stocks unchanged.

A2/A10

WHAT'S INSIDE

Demand from call centers, IT firms jacks up office space rates

Subic firms seen getting VAT exemption

GIR hits new high of $20.91B

Current account surplus seen growing by 19%

By Michelle V. Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES' CURRENT ACCOUNT surplus, buoyed by the sustained increase in remittances from overseas Filipino workers, is seen to grow by 19 percent to $4.8 billion by the end of the year.

The Institute of International Finance Inc. (IIF), an organization of financial institutions in industrialized countries, said the projected increase in the country's current account surplus would help the government lower its dependence on foreign borrowings. This would complement the government's goal of improving its fiscal condition, IIF added.

The Department of Finance said the government "has been resorting to (net) (lower) its foreign borrowings to lessen exposure to foreign exchange risks that could potentially limit its already huge debt.

The country's current account, which stood at a surplus of $4.354 billion as of end-2005, is a measure of the net foreign exchange inflows arising from the trade of goods and services and remittances.

"The current account surplus will continue to bolster the balance of payments (BOP) and facilitate the government's program of predictably reducing its dependence on non-resident bonds for deficit financing," IIF said in its assessment of the Philippine economy.

A government is usually forced to undertake foreign borrowings as a means to plug a budget deficit if it has a weak current account position. This is because the dollar inflows arising from foreign borrowings are used to prop up a country's foreign exchange reserves.

With a strong current account position, the IIF said, the Philippines could afford to pursue its plan of reducing its dependence on foreign borrowings.

The IIF said the Philippines' strong current account position would support the government's plan to retire about $411 million worth of Brady bonds in June using its existing liquidity.

The IIF said the expected growth in remittances from OFWs would compensate for the last year's expected trade deficit (a result of imports being higher than exports).

BSP's dollar purchases, OFW remittances provide the boost

By Doris C. Dumlao

CUNANAN

THE COUNTRY'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES hit a new high of $20.91 billion in end-April from the end-March level of $20.84 billion. In a press statement, Amando Tetangco Jr., governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Bsp) in charge of the Cunanan said the gross international reserves (GIR) level was boosted by the central bank's dollar purchases from the spot foreign exchange market and income from investments abroad, as well as national government deposits consisting of proceeds from its project loans.

The GIR—composed of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, special drawing rights from the International Monetary Fund and foreign investments—is an indicator of the country's ability to service its foreign exchange requirements particularly for imports or total debt servicing.

"The current GIR level is adequate to cover about 4.4 months of imports of goods and payments of services and income," Tetangco said.

"This level is also equivalent to 3.3 times the country's short term debt based on residual maturity," he added.

Tetangco assured the GIR even hit $21.06 billion on April 5 due mainly to the BSP's net foreign exchange purchases.

His sources said that in the first week of April alone, the BSP's net dollar purchases amounted to nearly $400 million as it took advantage of strong foreign exchange inflows mainly from overseas Filipino workers.

In early April, the state-owned Philippine National Bank (PNB) deposited in the BSP $34 million. The central bank also siphoned about $6 million from investments abroad. These were partly offset, however, by debt servicing requirements of the national government amounting to $11 million.

The BSP said that with the improvement in the GIR, its net international reserves rose by $65 million to $16.56 billion.

The NIR refers to the difference between the GIR and the combined total of short-term liabilities and use of IMF credits.

The GIR build-up over the past few months has been supported by proceeds from the dollar funding of the government's foreign borrowings, remittances from overseas Filipino workers, and foreign direct investment and portfolio inflows.

PHC assets intact, says company exec

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE BOARD OF LISTED FIRM Philcomsat Holdings Corp. (PHC) and the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) believe that, regardless, they have dissipated P1 billion in cash building of the listed firm.

PHC, a fill previously controlled satellite technology pioneer Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat). Both firms are owned by Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp. (POTC) whose shares were sequestered by the government in 1986 on allegations that those shares were acquired by ill-gotten wealth.

In a press conference yesterday, PHC director and vice president Philip Sanchez said the company's assets were intact.

Based on the company's financial report in 2005, its total assets stood at P1.48 billion, slightly lower than the P1.5 billion in 2004. Of the total assets, cash and cash equivalents account for P691 million in 2005, down from P746.2 million in 2004.

Sanchez also said Philcomsat paid only P1 million in taxes to confirm PHC, contrary to claims that the bulk of PHC's P1 billion worth of assets were posted in by Philcomsat.

Philcomsat subscribed to 259M6 million worth of PHC shares, of which 4 paid P463.1 million by assigning nine parcels of land and condominium unit in the Pacific Star Building to PHC. Balance (P394.4 million) was paid in cash.

"The land is still there, the (394 million (cash)) is still there. There was no disclosure (of assets)," Sanchez said.

Sanchez said that PHC has, in fact, grown from a P1.8 million company when it acquired Liberty Mines Inc. in 1996 to a company with no debt and with P1.5 billion in assets today.

Emilia Boncodin, chair of the board of eligible firm's cabinet part of the P1 billion that, he said, the company got from the listed firm's coffers.

In 2006, PHC invested P80 million in a 220-room tourist-class hotel project through a wholly-owned unit, Telecommunications Center Inc. (TCI).

Emilia earlier asked the board to explain how a substantial

RP, Japan OK $6.5-B currency swap deal

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES AND Japan have finally signed with the finish of Japan a second and much bigger swap arrangement under the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) at the sidelines of the Asian Development Bank annual meetings in Hyderabad, India last Thursday.

Similar swap arrangements are also being worked out by the BSP, acting as the agent for the Department of Finance—with South Korea ($1 billion) and China ($1 billion).

The swap deal with Japan will be effective for three years and may be extended by mutual agreement between the BSP and the MOF, as the agent for the Ministry of Finance of Japan.

The agreement will enable the two countries to swap their respective currencies for US dollars. The Philippines can swap up to $6 billion while Japan can swap up to $600 million in the event needs the balance of payments or short-term liquidity support arises.

The new agreement forms part of the measures adopted by the Asian+3 (Japan, Korea and China) Finance Ministers during their meeting on May 4, 2005 in Istanbul, Turkey, in pursuit of the CMI second stage.

The CMI second stage aims to enhance the effectiveness of the CMI as a foreign exchange liquidity support mechanism.

Under the second stage, Japan's swap commitment was doubled from $3 billion to $6 billion while the BSP made a new swap commitment of $500 million.

The CMI has created a network of bi-lateral currency swap arrangements among the central banks of Japan, China, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand to fend off potential speculative attacks against their respective currencies.

Demand from call centers, IT firms jacks up office space rates

Increases to continue for two years before tapering off

By Dianne L. Lucas

VACANCY LIMITS FOR PRIME OFFICE space in Metro Manila's two main business districts continue to drop as call centers and information technology companies hog the limited supply, a leading property management firm said yesterday.

More importantly, the rent and capital price appreciation will likely continue to rise for two more years before tapering off in 2008, officials of CB Richard Ellis Philippines Inc. said in a press briefing.

Already, the company said strong demand has pushed down vacancy levels for prime or "grade A" Makati office space to 4.3 percent at the end of the first quarter from 4.9 percent as of end-2005.

Some of the newest and most attractive office buildings in Makati are already reporting offers no vacancies or no available large or contiguous floor space, the company said.

Contiguous floor spaces are important for call centers and business process outsourcing (BPO) firms which depend on large floor plates to help manage hundreds of staffers at computer workstations.

Because of the dwindling supply of office space, Richard Ellis said the average rent for prime office space rose by 6.1 percent in the first quarter of 2006 to P636 per square meter from only P571 per square meter in the previous quarter.

"Gaining rates in some prime Makati buildings are already at P700 per square meter or above," corporate services director Joey Ballesteros said. "The tenants are still lining up to sign [contracts] at that level."

He added that major multinational corporations continue to either outsource their call center and back office functions to the Philippines or inquire about the possibility of doing so.

"With outsourcing growth not expected to plateau in the near future, many developers are now bullish enough to start new office projects that are specifically designed with call centers and BPO clients in mind," he said.

The same trend can be observed in the slightly cheaper Ortigas central business district where prime office space can now be rented at P468 per square meter, said the vacancy rate has fallen to 5.46 percent.

The supply crunch has more pushed down the vacancy rates of some "grade B" buildings to good locations to single-digit levels, the company said.

In spite of the rising rent and falling vacancies, real estate audit in the Philippines remains competitive in comparison to the rest of real estate in other locations.

The country also provides a well educated, English speaking workforce that is able to provide high quality customer service, especially to North American based clients.

"The call centers and BPOs are coming in the Philippines not just because of the low cost of living business here," CB Richard Ellis' Rick Isaac said. "They are coming here because their clients demand it."

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LandBank offering special financing facility

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES, THROUGH leasing arm LBP Leasing Corp., is offering a special financing program that will allow companies to provide their clients access to their products.

LBP Leasing general manager Manuel Lopez said the loan facility, which was open to both government and private corporations, would enable private and public sector companies to acquire new buses or coasters that they would use in providing free transportation to employees to and from their workplace.

He said this could serve as an additional non-wage benefit to employees as they would no longer have to spend that much on transportation.

To enable as many public and private sector firms to take advantage of this loan facility, he said LBP Leasing placed no ceiling on the amount of loans.

He said the leasing firm would accept all loan applications, provided all the required documents would be submitted.

The documentary requirements include an information sheet that interested firms will have to fill out, company profile, audited financial statements and income tax returns for the past three years, list of company officers, and borrowing resolution.

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Costly oil to cut Asia's growth

ADB sees region's economy slowing by 0.6 percentage points

HYDERABAD, INDIA—HIGH OIL PRICES will shave off at least 0.6 percentage points from Asia's overall economic growth, the chief economist of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said SAT.

"There are two aspects to the oil price increase. One is the magnitude of the increase and the second is the duration," Ifzal Ali said during a visit. If the increase lasts for a year, growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) will decline.

"If you have an oil price increase of about $10, from $60 to $70, developing Asia's GDP growth rate will be shaved off by about 0.6 percentage points," Ali said on the sidelines of the ADB's 39th annual general meeting being held in southern India.

Oil prices headed back toward an all-time high of $73.38 a barrel hit on April 21 amid ongoing concerns over Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Ali said slower growth rates will vary by country with China down by about 1 percentage point, India by 1.1 percentage point and Thailand by 1.8 percentage points.

He said government-driven subsidies to keep prices on oil products low were not sustainable in the long run.

"There are many countries in Asia, including India, where the subsidies have a long way to go. Either there are various ways subsidies are absorbed in the budget like Thailand or absorbed in the balance sheet of state-owned petroleum companies like in India," Ali said.

India produces about 30 million tons of crude oil annually but it imports 70 percent of its energy needs.

The state-owned oil firms bear the brunt of the subsidies for gasoline, kerosene and diesel sold below cost.

India's Congress party-led coalition government has not hiked fuel prices after crude-oil prices surged in 2006 because of the negative consumer backlash such a decision would have on ongoing elections in five Indian states.

The government is expected to raise prices after the elections end later in May according to statements by Finance Minister P. Chidambaram.

According to Petroleum Minister Murli Deora, state oil companies have subsidized 393 billion rupees ($8.7 billion) worth of liquefied petroleum gas, kerosene, diesel and petrol, during the fiscal year ended March 31.

Last year, Thailand and Indonesia dismantled their subsidies and growth rates plummeted in the first week quarter as prices went up, economist Ali said.

But those governments created special programs to help the poor be insted.

"In Indonesia, they generated about $10 billion and $3 billion were earmarked to target the real needy people," he said.

Yoshikazu Tsuruoka, the Japanese finance minister, also warned of major risks after meeting with his counterparts from China and Korea.

"We noted that the prospects of three countries' economic growth for 2006 are positive ... although the continuous high oil price and its upward trend are important risks that would may pose a major risk to the regional economy," he said.

ADB president Haruhiko Kuroda said the recent high oil prices were bound to chill.

"At $75 a barrel, it's unsustainable. Some geopolitical factors may destabilize the market," Kuroda said. From that, the economy level is very high," he said.

In its 2006 growth forecast, the ADB cut its estimate to 7.2 percent for Asia from 7.4 percent last year "based on the assumption that oil prices will gradually soften," he said. AFP

A VENDOR sits behind a crop of roasted ducks and chickens at a local market in downtown Hanoi. An Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation ministerial meeting on bird flu is being held in the Vietnamese central city of Da Nang. Officials from 21 Apec economies gather here for a three-day meeting aimed at outlining an action plan to tackle bird flu and better coordinate worldwide. AFP

Oil recovers, Asian stocks follow Wall St.

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES REBOUNDED ON Friday after their fall helped drive US shares to a fresh six-year closing high and Asian stocks were mostly firmer even though major markets were closed for holidays.

US crude futures rose as above $70 a barrel, as buyers cautiously returned to the market after a two-day slump wiped $5 off prices. Gold hit a new 25-year high on persistent fund buying sparked by a weak dollar and tensions over Iran's nuclear plans.

The US dollar recovered from a one-year trough against the euro and clawed higher against the yen and sterling as traders noted that strength in US jobs data could reverse the dollar's recent sneak sell-off.

Stock markets in Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea were shut on Friday but Taiwan shares rose to a fresh 5-1/2-year intraday high, led by financial stocks such as Chang Hwa Bank.

Australian shares were also higher due to gains in miners such as BHP Billiton on the back to Fosters copper prices, which soared nearly 8 percent on Thursday.

"Copper and gold prices were firmer overnight and that is supporting the resources sector," said Guy Hutchings, chief investment officer with Tower Australia, who helps manage about A$1 billion ($779 million) in local shares.

On Friday, copper prices were steady at $7,673 a tonne on Friday.

Macquarie Bank Ltd. rose nearly 2 percent after it said it was sewing up a consortium to make a cash bid for Australia's biggest ports operator, Sketch Corp. Ltd., challenging an agreed A$6 billion ($4.6 billion) offer by Toll Holdings Ltd., the country's largest logistics company.

Singapore's Straits Times index was 0.2% percent lower.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 0.36 percent, ending the day-test for bitter their record set at the height of the internet boom, as the Nasdaq Composite Index advanced 0.87 percent.

The euro was around $1.2695 after hitting a high of $1.2723 in New York on Thursday after ECB president Jean-Claude Trichet emphasized the central bank's vigilance on inflation.

Against the Japanese yen, the dollar was last at around 113.70 yen, after finishing at 113.61 in New York.

Traders saw an outside chance of a dollar bounce should US payrolls figures later on Friday handily beat forecasts of a 200,000 employment rise and a 4.7-percent jobless rate.

"The last to question whether the market will react to anything other than a dollar-negative number," said Alan Ruskin, chief international strategist at RBS Greenwich Capital.

"What all the dollar has all but ignored very positive US real economy numbers for the past fortnight, is notable contrast to the bond market." Reuters

Europe back on growth track, eurozone finance ministers say

BRUSSELS—BRUSSELS OFF HIGH OIL prices and rising interest rates, euro zone finance ministers declared the region's economy firmly back on the expansion track on Thursday.

The ministers were joined by European Central Bank president Jean-Claude Trichet, who said hours earlier in Frankfurt he would have to raise credit costs to exert inflation if growth in the region continued at its current pace.

That was a far cry from 2005, when he joked with a whimper as economic growth in the last three months slowed dramatically in the currency bloc as a whole and ground to a standstill in Italy and Germany.

Dutch Finance Minister Gerrit Zalm summed up the new mood of confidence, dismissing oil prices—which have driven crude profits of up to $1,000 per second for oil firms as a risk in terms of inflation but not in terms of economic growth.

Jean-Claude Juncker, Luxembourg's prime minister, said after chairing the talks that there was no sign at all that higher oil prices had had a knock-on effect of triggering large wage rises that could worsen inflation.

"The recovery is well on track and broadening. We're sensing it not above potential," he told a news conference.

The ministers met after Trichet said the independent ECB was increasingly worried about inflation risks and would raise its key policy rates if need as needed.

That was taken by the bulk of economists to mean he was set on taking the rate of borrowing in the euro zone from the start of November, having chosen to leave rates where they are—2.50 percent—at this week's meeting.

German Finance Minister Karl-Heinz Steuers, who just a few months ago was publicly voicing fears that rate rises could hurt a still-fragile economic upswing, sounded relaxed on that regard.

He said global growth, and that of Europe as a result, was looking healthy despite it all.

"I find it encouraging that we can get more than 4 percent (rise of world growth) with this oil price and interest rate climate," he told reporters as he arrived for the talks in Brussels. AP

EBay sees faster growth

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA—EBAY INC. CHIEF executive officer Meg Whitman on Thursday provided investors that faster growth and market share gains lay ahead, but left the company's near-term outlook unchanged as international sales growth slows and it steps up investments in new businesses.

Speaking at the San Jose-based company's annual analysts' meeting, Whitman said revenue would grow around 31 percent this year to between $5.7 billion to $5.9 billion, reaffirming a forecast that disappointed Wall Street last month, sending shares down 9 percent the following day.

"We plan to grow our revenues over time and gain share in our addressable markets," over the longer term, Whitman said, without giving details.

But six hours of executive presentations—including 111 slides describing the company's businesses—did little to soothe investor concerns over maturing growth in its core auctions business, and eBay binding shares ended the day off 8 cents at $38.15.

Whitman said the company's best growth opportunity was cross-selling between its three main businesses—eBay auctions and shopping, PayPal online payments and Skype "telephone service—which she dubbed "the power of three."

Pierre Ledbay analyst Jodi Bardwick said Bay Hd remained the most promising part of eBay's businesses in the near-term, but he was pessimistic whether eBay could gain market share in the overall e-commerce business as rivals such as Google Inc. target its markets. Reuters

DISCLOSURES

CITILAND DEVELOPMENT CORP. has declared a 20 percent stock dividend for stockholders of record as of July 5, payable on Aug. 1.

* * *

A. BRIONES CO. INC. has disclosed the repurchase of a total of 430,000 shares on May 4 (360,000 were bought at P0.80 each, 40,000 at P0.81 each, and 30,000 at P0.89 each).

* * *

SEMIRIG Corp. will host its annual stockholders' meeting on June 8, 1:30 p.m., at the Highlander Showroom, Mall of Asia, Pasay City. Stockholders of record as of May 8 are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

* * *

STOCK EXCHANGE Co. Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 13, 4 p.m., at the Harvest Tower, Cubao, Quezon City. Stockholders of record as of May 31 are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting. Compiled by Ador Francisco, PDI Research

RP Q1 results may be strong but outlook still weak, says S&P

By Doris C. Dumlao

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Adventure GLX Diesel	783,000	156,600	31,716	22,578	17,770	15,169
Adventure GLS Sport Gas MT	843,000	168,600	34,150	24,315	19,138	16,329
Adventure GLS Sport Gas AT	873,000	174,600	35,366	25,183	19,821	16,909
Adventure GLS Sport Diesel	834,000	166,800	33,784	24,049	18,926	16,149
Adventure Super Sport Diesel 2WD	871,000	174,200	35,291	25,129	19,778	16,873

Low Monthly Plans

SRP	DP (17.5%)	12 mos.	18 mos.	24 mos.	36 mos.	48 mos.	60 mos.
753,000	131,775	57,750	39,250	30,481	21,709	17,086	14,589
783,000	137,025	60,038	40,813	31,716	22,578	17,770	15,169
843,000	147,525	64,613	43,925	34,150	24,315	19,138	16,329
873,000	152,775	66,900	45,475	35,366	25,183	19,821	16,909
834,000	146,063	63,975	43,488	33,784	24,049	18,926	16,149
871,000	152,425	66,763	45,388	35,291	25,129	19,778	16,873

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

ALTHOUGH THE country has posted better-than-expected fiscal results for the first quarter of the year, global rating firm Standard & Poor's still believes that the fiscal outlook remains "weak" due to pressures in home infrastructure spending.

In an Asian investors conference yesterday, S&P said credit quality within the region was generally favorable, despite high oil prices, rising interest rates worldwide, and an uptick in inflation rates.

In the case of the Philippines, S&P is wary of unabated political tension, even though the country has managed to improve revenue collection.

"The deficit for the year should be met easily, but the fiscal outlook remains weak," S&P said.

The rating firm explained that the weak outlook stemmed from "a need to increase spending ... to lift future growth prospects, even as revenue increases."

S&P said the stimulus in the country was relatively calm, but it did not rule out the possibility of a resumed effort to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo in July or August, when the time limit of 12 months would have passed since the last impeachment attempt.

"In S&P's view, there is no credible unified opposition to the incumbent, and no credible alternative government."

Nevertheless, the disruption of any future impeachment effort and political politicking are likely to distract from economic reform," the rating firm said. "Not without more proactive policies and fiscal flexibility to address longer term economic challenges, credit improvements are likely to be limited."

S&P also noted that rising interest rates are expected in many parts of Asia, but this upward shock should not choke off growth in the region. If said fighter monetary policy in the developed world, particularly in the US, as well as higher oil prices, would likewise put pressure on Asian central banks to raise rates as well.

"In economies where conditions remain relatively frail—such as the Philippines...these hikes are likely to be small due to the need to support investment and employment growth," S&P said.

It noted that moves on rate increases in the Philippines had been held off because of spare industrial capacity and chances of wage pressure.

"The pause in raising lending rates should boost domestic growth," S&P said.

During its meeting on Thursday, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' policy-making Monetary Board kept its rates steady for the 7th straight month.

The BSP's overnight borrowing rate remains at 7.5 percent. The overnight lending rate is still 9.75 percent.

Tours, Leisure & Chow

Where to Stop Where to GO

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Mother's Day Blowout at The Bellevue

I love you mom!

Here comes the summer sun at Waterfront

Summer discounts at City Garden Hotel Makati

Seminar package at the Garden Plaza Hotel

THE PALM HOTELS HOUSEKEEPING TRAINING PROGRAM

The Palm Hotels composed of Las Palmas Hotel, Palm Plaza Hotel and The Executive Plaza Hotel recently had a "Housekeeping Service and Skills Enrichment Program". It was facilitated by the corporate executive housekeeper – Patty A. Martin assisted by the housekeeping management team. Shown in the photos are the team members of housekeeping with (second row, seated, second from left) Julie Lim and Lino Magsalay - Palm Plaza Hotel housekeeping supervisors, Grace Adlao - Las Palmas Hotel executive housekeeper, Connie Aviles - corporate financial controller, Patty A. Martin – corporate executive housekeeper, Ron Hernandez - Palm Plaza Hotel executive housekeeper, Rico Sergio Carandang - The Executive Plaza Hotel housekeeping supervisor, Napster Palad (The Executive Plaza Hotel linen controller and Anna Ria Teh - The Executive Plaza Hotel housekeeping coordinator.

The Nestlé Creamery: A fun fulfilling experience

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Mangosing
Assistant Editor Stella O. Gonzales

Text us your feedback: type SCI<space> then your message and send to 2327 (Globe) or 883 (Smart)

New WHO child growth standards out

By Charles E. Ballan

IS YOUR CHILD MEASURing up to World Health Organization standards?

The United Nations food agency for health recently released a new international growth standards for infant and young children (up to 5 years) and for the first time provided evidence and guidance on how every child in the world should grow.

The WHO Child Growth Standards say that children from anywhere in the world and given the optimum care in life have the potential to develop to within the same range of height and weight. It demonstrates that differences in children's growth to age 5 are more influenced by nutrition, feeding patterns, environment and healthcare rather than genetics or ethnicity.

Invaluable tool

"These standards will be an invaluable tool for everyone—parents, mothers' healthcare providers, policy makers and other organizations—in detecting undernutrition, overweight/obesity and other growth-related conditions," said Dr. Julius Ecclesiastes, executive director of Philippine Children's Medical Center.

"With these standards, we can now properly and promptly address these health conditions at their earliest manifestation."

The first set of these growth charts released late last month includes the usual growth indicators including length/height-for-age, weight-for-age, weight-for-length, and weight-for-height.

For the first time, the WHO included two new standards: a Body Mass Index standard for children as well as a Motor Milestones of Achievement standard for infants motor development milestones (sitting without support, standing with assistance, hands and knees crawling, walking with assistance, standing alone and walking alone).

Ecclesiastes said the previous standard, to use since the late 70s, was based on data from a limited sample of children from the United States and described only how children grow in a particular region and time. It did not provide a sound basis for evaluating optimum international standards and norms.

"It is reported that with these new standards we will now be provided with a clearer means to assess the well-being of our infants and young children and to detect growth and disease in the process," said Ecclesiastes.

8,500 kids

The new standards were based on a study conducted by WHO in 1997 involving 8,500 children who enjoyed an optimum environment and proper growth—recommended infant and young child feeding practices, good healthcare, and other factors associated with good health outcomes like healthy diet and prevention of infection.

The children came from six countries of different ethnic backgrounds and cultural settings in Brazil, Ghana, India, Norway, Oman and the US.

The markers of these children followed fourth position such as breastfeeding and not smoking during and after pregnancy.

The new standards are posted at the WHO website: www.who.int/childgrowth/standards/en/.

ONE of the new Child Growth Standards released recently by the World Health Organization.

Poor nations fail their underfed children—Unicef

WELL OVER HALF OF THE world's undernourished children live in just four nations: India (57 million), Bangladesh (16 million), Pakistan (8 million) and China (7 million), the United Nations Children's Fund said this month.

The Philippines, with three million underweight children, is one of the countries with the largest numbers. The other countries are Nigeria, Ethiopia and Indonesia, with two million each; the Democratic Republic of Congo, with three million, and Vietnam, with two million, Unicef said.

Unicef said developing nations should do far more for their undernourished children to secure a long-time UN goal of halving the world's underweight infants by 2015.

Despite woeful progress in many poor countries, the poor has tapped to others, the meeting to explore related UN initiatives already or pursuing dynamic boosting education rates and spurring economic growth, Unicef said.

146M underweight kids

Since 1990, the 4-sitting point set by the United Nations, the rate has fallen just 5 percentage points from 31 percent to 27 percent, it said.

The goal is to bring the rate to 16 percent by 2015. Currently there are about 146 million children under 5 who are moderately or severely underweight, it said.

With only nine years left to meet the goal, "that report card shows clearly that the world must step up its priorities in order to reach the Millennium Development Goal target of reducing child undernutrition by half," Unicef Executive Director Ann Veneman said.

"But it shows just as clearly that reducing undernutrition is attainable if the lessons of the past 15 years are applied," Veneman said in a foreword to the new report. Her organization is releasing the report at a UN world summit in New York in 2000.

Inadequate nutrition contributes to an estimated 53 percent of all deaths among infants under 5, and nutritional interventions a most effective when it takes place during the first two years of life, Unicef said.

Among steps it recommended were promoting breastfeeding as the exclusive source of nutrition for the first six months of life, improving the diet of pregnant women to prevent up birth weights and ensuring adequate supplies of iodized salt, iron, vitamin A and other vital micronutrients in children's diets.

More than half of the world's underweight children live in South Asia, according to Unicef figures. Another 33 percent are in East Asia and the Pacific, 12 percent in West and Central Africa, 11 percent in Eastern and Southern Africa, 3 percent in the Middle East and North Africa, and 3 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean, it said.

Reuters

When other animals get avian flu

DISCOVER

Hyenie Santos Ballon

EARLIER THIS WEEK, INDIA banned poultry imports from Great Britain to prevent the possible spread of avian H5N1 flu to its domestic birds. The week before, Russia banned the importation of poultry products to and April, Bangladesh banned a list of 16 countries from which they would not import poultry, including Great Britain and the Philippines. And approximately one month ago, the European Union decided to extend the ban on poultry products imported from several Eastern European nations.

With so much emphasis on preventing infected birds from spreading or entering the disease to other countries, this is perhaps a good time to remind you that birds aren't the only animals that can act as carriers for the avian H5N1 flu.

In the past three years, a multitude of articles have appeared in the journal Emerging Infectious Diseases regarding avian flu and other animals.

For a virus to successfully jump from one species to another, it must be able to make the transition to the new host and enough genetic similarity between the species so that the virus can actively replicate.

As last week's column noted, while humans and birds share the same avian flu receptors, humans cannot easily transmit the disease to other humans via coughing or sneezing because the virus replicates deep within the human respiratory system.

Cats

The first report of an animal—a leopard—other than a bird being infected with avian flu was documented at a Bangkok zoo in January 2004. After other felines, both wild and domestic, in the area were later found to be infected with avian flu, researchers began examining the effects in more carefully.

It was assumed at the time that the carnivores infected by the virus because they ate raw, infected poultry. According to the Oct. 6, 2004 issue of the journal Science, researchers (Keuleers et al.) from the Erasmus Medical Center in the Netherlands found that cats could be infected by live chicken, and more worrisomely, could transmit the disease to other cats.

In the June 2005 issue of the American Journal of Pathology, Keuleers et al. further note that the H5N1 virus infection causes systemic disease and spreads by potentially novel routes to organs and increases transmission here.

Pigs

In the August 2000 issue of the Journal of Virology, researchers from the United States, Thailand and Vietnam studied several outbreaks in Vietnam that had been believed with avian flu. Their study showed that while the pigs could individually be infected with the H5N1 flu strain, they weren't too good at transmitting the disease to each other, and therefore were less likely to be able to transmit the disease to humans.

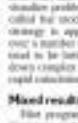
Recent reports have noted that other animals such as dogs, bears, weasels and seals have since been found to be infected with avian flu.

People should realize that birds are not the only animals that can be affected by avian flu and that there may be other ways for people to become infected with the virus.

More stringent sanitary measures may be necessary within a household to prevent the possible transmission of avian flu from, say, an infected cat or dog to its human owners. And humans should see to it that their pets aren't exposed to possibly contaminated food in the first place to avoid having their beloved animals bite (and infect) the hands that feed them.

E-mail the author at mastermind@inq7.net.

Singapore vs US math



EUREKA!

Dawnay S. Lee-Chua

IN THE 2003 TIMSS (TRENDS IN INTERnational Math and Science Study), Singapore students ranked first in the world, while the US was 16th out of 46 countries, among the lowest in industrialized nations. This trend, I thought not new, was quite alarming, so US schools should look to learn from Singapore. The American Institutes for Research spearheaded a comparative study on the math frameworks, textbooks, assessments, and teacher preparation in the two countries.

Singapore started strong in all areas. It uses two frameworks: a highly focused regular framework and an elevated one with similar coverage but done at a slower pace and with more support from expert teachers. The framework is based on good textbooks that develop in-depth understanding of math concepts compared to US textbooks which rarely go beneath the surface of definitions and formulas.

Singapore's assessments are rigorous and are required to demonstrate sufficient math skills first, no time (time of their US peers) even before they near college training to be certified instructors. Each year they undergo 100 hours of continuing training.

Singapore also gives more challenging exams and judges performance based on a criterion-referenced approach that rewards schools for individual student progress over time.

Math experts

How can Singapore make all these possible? Over the past decades, the Ministry of Education regularly hired math experts to interview teachers to find out what is needed and where there are deficiencies.

Elementary textbooks usually covered only about a third of the topics in US textbooks for Philippine ones, for that matter), but the material was taught well with more depth. Visual aids were used frequently to make sense of abstract concepts.

In December 2006, the Wall Street Journal gave an example: "Singapore math texts and kids to draw bars and other diagrams to visualize problems...a technique called bar modeling. When this strategy is applied consistently over a number of years, children tend to be better able to break down complex problems and do rapid calculations in their head."

Mixed results

Pilot programs based on the Singapore system have been instituted in the US for students in Baltimore and Montgomery County, Maryland; Fourth Middle, Montclair, and Princeton, New Jersey.

Two of the four sites produced significant improvements in student outcomes, but overall there were mixed results due to US teachers who lacked preparation in implementing the new curricula well and high student mobility, which limited the children's cumulative experience with the program.

However, educators are generally optimistic and hope to spread the program to more schools. The full opinions remain to be taken in all aspects. Compared to Singapore, the US focuses more on 21st century skills such as communication, reasoning, making connections, communication, and applied math, such as statistics and probability.

It's about time we looked to our Asian neighbors for help, rather than rely on traditional Western methods of teaching and learning.

The report can be found in the American Institutes for Research website www.air.org/news/default.aspx.

E-mail the author at dawnlee@inq7.net.

Flu pandemic may be caused by another virus

SINGAPORE—A FLU PANDEMIC may be caused by a virus strain other than the feared H5N1 and political commitment is needed to prevent the next one from claiming millions of lives, a top World Health Organization (WHO) official said on Thursday.

"I think the issue is not whether there would be a pandemic [but] when the pandemic will occur and how severe the impact will be, and we are uncertain...as to what the virus strain would be," said Ari Fenton, director of the WHO communicable diseases department for Southeast Asia.

"It may not be H5N1. A lot of people feel if not by H5N1, that's why there are a lot of readers going on regarding the virus, but still we cannot be sure," he told an international forum organized by British medical journal The Lancet.

113 human deaths

The H5N1 virus has infected millions of birds worldwide and killed 113 people, mostly from Asia. Scientists fear it could mutate into a strain easily passed from person to person, triggering a pandemic like the one in 1918-19 which killed an estimated 50 million people worldwide.

Avian cases have said that eradication of the possible death toll could be as high as 7 million. Fenton said the "potential for a pandemic remains imminent or inevitable."

"The major concern is that if the virus builds up the capacity for human to human transmission, the impact will indeed be really catastrophic," he said.

Several countries have begun to take the threat seriously and are prepared to implement emergency plans as well as stockpile flu and prevention of infection.

Fenton said governments must also step up their commitment to fight the disease.

"But it doesn't just go directly that reducing undernutrition is attainable if the lessons of the past 15 years are applied," Veneman said in a foreword to the new report. Her organization is releasing the report at a UN world summit in New York in 2000.

AFP

BUSINESS

Subic firms seen getting VAT exemption

Buñag says BIR to issue regulation to ease locators' concerns

By Michelle V Ramos

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue is set to issue a revenue regulation exempting businesses located at the Subic Bay Freeport and Special Economic Zone from the value-added tax.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag said the BIR needed to issue the regulation to remove confusion over the status of Subic locators in terms of paying VAT.

The move was prompted by the request made by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority on behalf of its locators, most of which export products.

SBMA administrator Armand Arreza said that while locators have no understanding that they were indeed exempted from the VAT, they wanted it spelled out in writing by the BIR.

The confusion came following the implementation of the VAT Reform law, which suspended the coverage of the VAT to previously exempted firms starting November last year, and raised its rate from 10 to 12 percent starting February.

The locators were no longer sure if they remained exempted from the expanded VAT than the need for clarification from BIR.

Buñag said, however, that since Subic is a freeport and an economic zone, the fiscal incentives granted by Republic Act No. 7227 applies to locators there.

The law states that locators in economic zones should only pay a 5-percent tax on gross income in lieu of all other taxes.

But the BIR chief said that while locators in Subic were exempted from paying the VAT, they were not allowed to claim refunds for the VAT they shouldn't every time they purchase goods or services, rebate pokes allowable include the 12-percent VAT.

"The amount [of input VAT] should be part of their operating cost," Buñag said.

BUÑAG

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CHEVROLET

Group bucks tariff plan on oil products

By Abigail L. Ho

IMPOSING a higher tariff on refined petroleum products will distort the downstream oil industry as it will favor the local oil refining companies, according to an industry group.

"There will be no level playing field as the law will be unduly favoring a certain sector of the industry," said Glenn Yu, president of the Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association.

A tariff differential will make imported refined petroleum products more expensive compared to similar products produced here by the local oil companies.

Buying U-shape and president Ramon Villavicencio had earlier said that an uneven playing field would likely cause smaller players like his company to close shop.

This would place consumers at a disadvantage, as they would again be given fewer options, he said.

The first downstream oil industry deregulation law, RA 8180 signed in 1996, imposed a 4-percent tariff differential between crude and finished products.

The high court struck down the law because of that provision.

The current oil deregulation law, RA 8479 signed in 1998, does not mandate any tariff differential, putting refiners and pure finished product importers on equal footing in terms of tariffs.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla had earlier said that the government was willing to explore the possibility of instituting some sort of tariff differential between refiners and pure importers.

However, before doing so, he said a careful study of the legal implications of such a move would have to be done, considering how the Supreme Court reacted when such a provision was included in the first downstream oil deregulation law.

PNOC backs sale of plants

ILIGAN CITY—THE PNOC ENERGY DEvelopment Corp. has backed plans to sell geothermal plants in the country to the private sector, saying it would ensure the development of additional energy sources.

PNOC EDC president Fred Aquino said that with the lack of funds facing the government, selling the geothermal plants would bring in some of the money needed to arrest a future "energy crisis."

The Philippines' geothermal plants produce a combined 2,000 megawatts of electricity, but the Department of Energy (DOE) projected that 2,000 MW more could be tapped to address the looming crisis.

Aquino said the government could not do so by itself because of its dwindling funds.

Among the energy sources the government wanted to privatize, he said, were the PNOC geothermal power plants.

But Aquino admitted that the bidding process and vetting have been hindering the sale of government energy assets to the private sector.

He described the existing law on public bidding as "very transparent, but not very efficient."

Just a week ago, Aquino said the bidding for the coal-fired power plant in Calaca, Batangas did not push through after BHEI Holdings, a local power firm, one of the two bidders, failed to come to terms.

Aquino said when the bidding for the second round took place, BHEI's rival, Hong Kong-Listed Power Corp., failed to match the government's counter-price.

Aquino said they were required to sort another four months before a new bidding process on the Calaca plant could be conducted.

"I don't know how we can successfully do it," Aquino said about the moves to lend over the energy sources to private firms. *Reports Jay Sarcilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

PROPERTY

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

RP's first luxury condo by the sea

By Cesar D. Mangawang

THOSE WHO LOVE the sea will be glad to know that a luxury condominium will soon rise on a seaside cliff within Terrazas de Punta Fuego in Nasugbu, Batangas.

After a year of planning, Landco Pacific Corp. is building not only the country's first luxury condo by the sea but also its first vertical development, Amani en Terrazas, on 1.6 hectares of rolling terrain spanning up to 75 meters above sea level.

According to Jose Antonio Inigo Burgos, Landco Pacific SBU head and vice president of residential assets, the first 4 towering half a billion pesos in the condominium which will have two structures—Casa del Mar and Casa de Alma. Amani is derived from amor, which means love, and mar, the sea.

Construction is expected to be complete in two and a half years. Casa de Amor will be finished by the second quarter of 2008 while Casa del Mar will be completed by the fourth.

RP'S FIRST...

LANDCO Pacific Corp. combines the sophistication of high urban living and the calm, cool and breezy lifestyle of a resort in the soon-to-rise Amara en Terrazas in Nasugbu, Batangas.

CONSTRUCTSCOPE

SM City Clark opens May 13

SM CITY CLARK, THE 24TH SM supermall and mixed-use shopping, leisure and entertainment excitement to this country's first Special Economic Zone, will open its doors to the public on May 13.

Strategically located at 185,000 square meter property on M.A. Roxas Avenue in the Clark Special Economic Zone in Angeles City, the 66,756-sq m three-level mall is SM's second supermall in Pampanga. The first was SM City Pampanga in San Fernando.

With its circular facade and wall cladding in four shades of blue, SM City Clark is an innovation from the traditional SM mall design. It has a grand 11-meter-space foyer with rocket-shaped ceiling in aluminum and two clerestories on the left and right wing. Visitors will also have a breathtaking view of a twelve-meter-tall tri-tier outdoor fountain area.

For customer convenience, it also has conservatory-inspired, as well as an elevated covered walkway with escalators to Baguio Road. It also has 3,663 open parking slots.

Shopping fun at SM City begins with the SM Department Store and hypermarket and SM mainstays like the Home, SM Appliance Center, ACE, Watsons, Mail Boxes and Parisian Shoes, as well as fashion boutiques, home stores, jewelry stores, shoe stores and novelty stores. You'll also have computer stores, Internet cafés and leisure stores for the cyber generation.

Pampanguenos can get good food at the SM Food Court, the mall will also have six state-of-the-art cinemas with a total of 2,000 seats as well as a large performance and exhibition space.

Cebu Social Housing Foundation proxy

[illegible] is the new president of the Cebu Social Housing Foundation Inc., the social arm of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Cebu). Along with [illegible] Penaranda C. Ramos, his other officers and trustees have been [illegible] were recently inducted by lawyer Federico I.S. Dumbo, president and CEO of Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig fund) at the Waterfront Plaza Hotel, coinciding with the Cebu Chamber's monthly meeting.

Alvarez is president of Sumaguad Inc., president and CEO of PPA Services Corp., chair, Vistar Realty Corp., managing director, MMG Land and Property Corp., director, Southern Mountain Foundation Inc. and Philippine Japanese Foundation; senator, Junior Chamber International (JCI); former national president and other positions, Philippine Jaycees Inc., and founding president, former treasurer and trustee, and currently secretary, The Balikatan-ng Young Men Foundation Inc.

Where to earn his bachelor of arts major in economics, history and political science from De La Salle University-Manila.

Other CREB officers are Cletito J. Wenceslao, vice chair; Manuel H. Torres, executive vice president; Douglas S. Ibasanes, VP-internal affairs; Bogato Simon Jr., VP-external and special projects; Avelino P. Arcaba, VP-treasurer; Arsenio Antonio Jr., VP-finance; Roger M. Garcia Jr., VP-public relations; Ismelio C. Bitas, treasurer; Porfino P. Arriesgo, Pablo A. Portillo Jr., Carlos A. Balamonan and Bonnette L. Posadas, trustees; Juliano P. Nuñez, corporate secretary; Sammy S. Velencia, immediate past president and Fredin C. Tann and Teofes P. Machida, advisers.

AddMix in Konstruktura Asya 2006

[illegible] in the Philippines' construction industry, AddMix recognizes the importance and magnitude of this regional-wide exhibition and will create more opportunities for local construction companies as well as give them the chance to interact with their foreign counterparts. This event also allows it to give local construction companies one of the quality-driven, fast and ever-growing Western Pacific construction industry.

AddMix has four variants which cater to specific needs in the construction site. These are AddMix Plus, the solution expander for mortars used in filling and laying concrete hollow blocks; AddMix Easy, the garden mortar enhancer; AddMix Ultra, the further enhancements for concrete poured in beams, columns and floorings; and AddMix Diamond, which has triple bonding agents responsible for superior adhesion and faster setting and curing.

Model unit blessing at Cathedral Heights

CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS HOLDINGS INC. RECENTLY HELD THE BLESSING of their model unit of Cathedral Heights Townhouses, an exclusive 90-unit townhouse community in New Manila, Quezon City.

It is located adjacent to St. Luke's Memorial Hospital and Medical Center on E. Rodriguez Avenue. Cathedral Heights Townhouses is only a few minutes away from hospitals, schools and commercial establishments.

Cathedral Heights' 1.1- hectare development offers the convenience of a gated community complete with 24-hour security, a spacious pavilion, a function-staged pool, children's wading pool and clubhouse play area.

Its Southern Californian architecture is evident in the solid structure and elaborate façade of the townhouses.

Cathedral Heights Townhouses' phase 1, consisting of 52 new 4- to 5-bedroom units, and the Lexicon Park, are making full completion. More than 60 percent of the units are sold, as interest on investment are increasing.

BELASSO LAUNCH

Belasso Land Inc., a real estate developer and marketing company, was formally launched during a cocktail event aboard the luxury yacht "Princess Regina." It is composed of young successful entrepreneurs (from left) treasurer Warren Espejo, chair Michael Romero, who also heads the multibillion peso Manila Harbour Center, and president Frank Bautista.

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WHETHER IT BE FOR LACK OF room, the desire for a new look, or a change in lifestyle, we have our own reasons for renovating our living spaces.

In this information age of Internet and cable TV, so many alternatives are devoted to promoting architecture and interior design. We see a lot of practical tips and create ideas that can suit different budgets. We are inundated with suggestions from everything modern to nostalgic from the trash bin to where to purchase the most expensive furnishings. Furniture and builders' depots abound. For the unseasoned consumer, the vast array of options could get pretty murky. Don't let this deluge of information confuse you. First, take time out to think, think out your plans, [and your resources], and decide on the rules of your renovating game.

Clearly define your purpose in renovating. Knowing exactly why you are renovating can make later decisions easy. In a house where both husband and wife love to mention the kids may have their own ideas, your options should be narrowed down only to those that point to why you decided to renovate in the first place. For example, if the main intention is to give Junior a separate room, budget wise, Dad's entertainment cabinet must not take precedence.

Have a theme or a concept

Having a theme and a concept will help create a more interesting and unified look. It must be something that the occupants agree to and must express the interests of the majority it could be eclectic, modern, minimalist, Asian, country, retro, or from wherever age or region the family will be comfortable with. The choices are unlimited but it is a good way to show your family's personality and interests.

Removing or unduly limiting [the] existing openings, the all-important consideration for natural lighting and ventilation takes a back seat because of the need for more living space. Doors or lightwells are closed off because an elevation of the kitchen [concerns]. If you bought a house in this condition, try to visualize if it might be better to sacrifice some [space] to increase your comfort.

One way to create synergism of space is by knocking down unnecessary walls but of course you would need to talk to experts about which walls can be safely torn down. It would be more appealing to combine a small living room and a small dining room into one big living space, with sufficient furnishings to demarcate one function from the other. Removing slim partitions to unnecessary rooms, furniture, or severe pieces, which may or may not be replaced with more useful, less cumbersome ones.

When adding, make sure you maximize cross ventilation and natural lighting. We can not always rely on air-conditioning and lighting fixtures, especially now that power costs continue to soar. It is always a greater advantage to ensure that often used areas in your home are open to air and light. Dim libraries make them easier to doze and less prone to values.

Include the outdoors in your planning. You can either make the outdoors more accessible or visible from within or you can try to bring elements of nature inside your home. This creates more breathing space that will be very useful in the hot and humid months. And it can enable you to enjoy additional rooms while being shielded from inclement weather.

Instead of wooden-[sashed] bronze-[case] windows [with] louvers [that] slide down not because they are more efficient that way but because the glass doors are more expensive than the windows. You may choose to open up those areas to make use of the outdoors to mold [your] living spaces. It's not just functional, it's healthier too.

Economical ways

Knowing and adding colors are economical ways of beautifying your home with great impact. Before you even begin, invest in a painting guide. Likewise, there are so many decorating books for you to follow and they are worth the investment. Even just adding one colorful, tasteful, decorative piece can spice up a monotonous corner.

When consulting experts to help you, give them a detailed list of what you need or want on the room. The renovation task is an exacting one so any delayed additional requirements from you [will] require engineering and a waste of valuable time and money.

The builders must be certain of exactly what you want in order to put your renovation vestige finds of you must have the same picture of the final product. Prepare photos or pictures of particular elements that may be unique or hard to explain. However, you must also learn to [be] adaptable as to how feasible your ideas are in the "real world."

Lastly, have fun planning and doing the renovation. Get involved and get the family involved. They should have a say in things, [although] yours must be the deciding way. At the age of 8, my kids know precisely what they wanted - from the style of their beds to the design of the wallpaper. They wanted nothing but in their [room] and were free to express their individuality there.

Giving sufficient leeway encourages the family to participate in the project and ultimately appreciate the results. In the end, all of you can enjoy living and sharing your freshly renovated place.

THIS is the artist's sketch showing the proposed renovation instead of [adding] a [second] floor. [The] recommended opening up the walls to maximize view, lighting and ventilation.

THIS is the sports center of the Tual View Heights which is scheduled for renovation.

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quarter of the same year.

To be sold exclusively to Club Punta Fuego members are 95 condo units with unique and unobstructed views of the South China Sea. These will be 35 units at the three-story Casa de Amor while seven-story Casa del Mar will have 70 units.

Prices of the condo units range from 99 to 12 million for Club Punta Fuego members.

Asian-European design

The central design theme of Amara on Punta is a fusion of Asian and Western architecture. Inspired by Spanish Mediterranean design elements, the developer will blend old world elegance with Asian elements.

The natural setting will be maximized by the developer through trellised bridges, waterfront areas and tropical landscaping. The terrain's gentle undulations and recorded curves.

Architect Christian Luna of Amara design group said the condo units will be laid out in such a way that sliding or folding doors will separate the living room from the adjoining open lanai. Designed as an open-concept, each unit will have a large amount of space when the panels are folded during the day. To ensure privacy at night, the panels can be shut once more.

Amara is tailored for people who love the sea and who love to [be] near it.

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FEDERAL Land boasts another ultra-luxe development: Mactan Tower has been recently completed until the penthouse, showing that the project's construction is ahead of schedule.

Luxurious resort-inspired living on the rise in RP

FEDERAL LAND INC., ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S leading property developers, has added to its list of upscale developments another masterpiece with Mactan Tower, Phase 1 of this luxurious—an upscale, condominium development offering resort living at the heart of the city. Construction of Mactan Tower is in full swing and is expected for turnover within 2007.

Federal Land has remained consistent with its impressive record for efficient development, with the construction of Mactan Tower "ahead of schedule. Just five months after the first structure pouring in 2005, the tower had been officially completed until the podium level. Work has now begun on the residential tower, with an expected topping-off in August.

Consistent adherence

Backed by 16 years of experience, Federal Land has solidified its place in the real estate industry through a consistent adherence to high quality standards of land development and timely delivery of structures.

Sky Garden is situated within Metropolitan Park, an emerging master-planned community set Banza Boulevard, right beside Manila Bay. The completed Harbor Bay Residences, Bay and Crystal Bay towers offer residents convenient city living amid a sprawling natural environment, with 60 percent of the 40-hectare community dedicated to greenery and open space.

The rising Mactan Tower provides the same tranquility and comfort of idyllic living. But then, the luxurious atmosphere is fuel her enhanced by facilities reminiscent of a five-star resort. The completed project would have units with more than range from 44 to 68 sq m for the charming one bedroom units, from 66 to 110.5 sq m for spacious two-bedroom units and from 93 to 192.5 sq m for generous three-bedroom units.

Each unit features trendy modern design and careful space planning that caters to the distinct tastes of discerning homebuyers. Splendid floor-to-ceiling wall windows provide residents with breathtaking sights. Bathrooms are treated to a view of the famous Manila Bay in the west, and the resort-style pool garden or Mactan city-scape in the east.

Services, facilities

Federal Land made sure of the inclusion of the modern services for Mactan Tower residents. All units come with a parking space, plus provision for cable TV and telephone lines. The fire safety system and standby power generator prevent dangers and other inconveniences during emergency situations.

True to its promise of an everyday vacation, the whole family will enjoy hours of unwinding in upscale facilities offered by Mactan Tower. The crowned will being of the residents was the primary consideration in the meticulous planning of this high-rise abode. The podium area features a free-form outdoor swimming pool, children's wading pool, outdoor playground, 12 poolside gazebos and a retail center.

The 500 sq m lush resort gaming green is available for golf enthusiasts who want to practice their swing. Food aficionados can look forward to having grill parties and picnics at the outdoor barbecue area. The sundown activity center serves as the perfect venue for intimate gatherings wherein the prestigious function room is available for big get and lover exclusive events.

Mactan Tower offers best of both worlds: the private, luxurious ambiance of a resort paradise and the exciting convenient lifestyle offered by the urban setting. For inquiries about Sky Garden Mactan Tower, call 911-0888 or log on to www.federalland.com.ph.

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THE CHAMBORD takes its inspiration from the lavished and grandeur of the Renaissance buildings in France's Valley of Loire—Chateau de Chambord.

of the month with a grace that gives visitors of an abode fit for queens and princesses. It is more than a mansion, it is a palace, and South Forbes is bringing the atmosphere of France to the country with the launch of South Forbes Golf City's newest project, Chateau de Paris.

Chambord, the first of the model chateaux, takes its inspiration from the lavished and grandeur of the Renaissance buildings in France's Valley of Loire-Chateau de Chambord. The magnificent palace was inspired by the great Leonardo da Vinci, who was said to have added his own touches/features to the chateau's facade and interior.

Modern interpretation

South Forbes' Chambord brings this treasure to the 21st century. The classical erudition of the South Forbes French chateau meets ease from the home-bonded European decorations. The result is a modern interpretation of the classics that will be driving you to traditions and style. It brings sophistication and glamour living of the French Renaissance refined to today's more livable and relaxed tastes.

Gone are the low-ceilings that make the interiors seem dark and heavy but the color scheme keeps the gold and burgundy of the traditional French theme. The luxurious interior has the traditional office, effect of the iconic XV chairs with the updated and more streamlined design with contemporary fabrics. Art pieces are framed in silver gilded frames and the mystery brings the spirit of French gardens inside the home. With just the right amount of richness, the house recreates the rich

tional feel while still keeping the home in the 21st century.

Sumptuous living space

The Chambord offers a sumptuous living space for a family to make it their own. On the first floor, the living room opens up to the dining room and leads to a spacious formal kitchen, perfect for entertaining guests or just for a normal day. There is also a den beside the living room that may be converted into an entertainment center or even an office. Upstairs are the three bedrooms, each with their own bathrooms, a library and study room, as well as a lounge. The balcony, running from the study, leads to the balcony at the front of the house.

South Forbes also offers Fontainebleau and Chantilly models of chateaux with each of their own interiors that will make you fall in love with everything that is French and would want to make it your own.

As if that's not enough, jewelers and horseburers get a free golf membership in the 18-hole South Forbes Golf Club for every lot purchase of Chateau de Paris. That also gives them the chance to play in 42 top golf courses in Europe, Asia and North America through the exchange golf club of IMG Sports Club.

THE DEN beside the living room may be converted into an entertainment center or even an office.

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Super! bodies of the new Century page 02

Fiery denim for the Super! generation page 04

Oops! Super! page 07 did it again

Super! page 01 scratch and sniff

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SEDUCEYRE. runner-up Elaine Gallardo beat Century Tuna

PINK PANTHER. Supermodel hunt Bianca Valerio

SUPER MODEL. Super! columnist, Raya Manzanal

BUZZ OF THE CENTURY. Phoenesha Buenaobra is Super! hot

THE DRAGON. Teresa Herrera

PRINCE CENTURY WITH CINDERELLA. Century Tuna's Lee Powell's girlfriend Muriel Santos at Pier One in Boracay

COUPLE OF THE CENTURY. Richard and Lucy Gomez at the Wicks and Lisa party

BRUCKNALF LITE. Supermodel runner-up Danielle Poli

Super! bod all in the na of the Sup

BODY LANGUAGE. Awatar O'Hord Lara

AT THE CORE OF SUMmer's hottest body fest that had abs of steel, killer smiles and toned muscles is a sense of zest to live the healthy life and flaunt all that you've got.

Want to know you're flying to Boracay, all you could think of is having the guts to add those extra crunches to make sure the right wins out. But wait—it takes more than those extra hours at Gumbi to achieve the perfect bod. When you indulge during the days and give in over further at night, the right dose of discipline is needed to achieve that Super! look.

To disseminate that Super! message, Century Tuna, a.k.a. the Super! team,

TUNA TWISTS. First runner-up were Glenn Hindu and Ramon Ballentin, and runners-up were Chris Samson and Danielle Poli.

STRIP TEASE. Century Tuna poster boy Will Devaughn

HI AND HAB POSSE. Siblings John and Rory Aldi, Paolo Ilo-ilo and Geoff M

Mas makulay, mas masaya!

Promo period from April 16 to June 5, 2006

Promo mechanics details at the back of Nagpuno Chocolait Liter pouch

SUPERMAN. Century Tuna Superbods male image model winner Jon Mulleda

PRAISES FOR PAEZIA. Michelle on the ramp

GARTH EYES HUNK. 2nd runner-up Chris Samson

SEXY MATE! Superbods finalist Lee Pillogon was crowned favorite

ABS UNLIMITED. Marc Nolasco

VISUAL FIX. Victor Consunji

BALLESMANIAS. Superbods finalist Edward Fuguntes

ies ame er! Meat

"Back to Jet". "I am a businessman [illegible]" After these and other introductions that further enriched pageant folkality history, the final five were chosen and grilled by the judges, a motley crew of models and fitness advocates chaired by timed duration. (Bb Bautista and Bianca Valverde sealed our army wheels after another, expertly hosting the show.

In night's pack, two names were announced by Angel and Century Tuna marketing maven Ayesh Evangelista (Ayesh has Wallaby and Tiffany Michelle Paeza were both unanimously picked by their well rounded area in body, mind and personality. These days, it is agreed that we should all look good, feel good and be good. (The last part I already did, so this does not count on us. Alright—, grow our menu from being a lifestyle that represents the dicho but was "health is wealth" adage.

Oh yes, story are so Super!

SUPER DUO. Century Tuna Superbods image model winners Jon Mulleda and Michelle Paeza

CENTURY COVER GIRLS. Vanna Garcia and Viva Morales as Pier One

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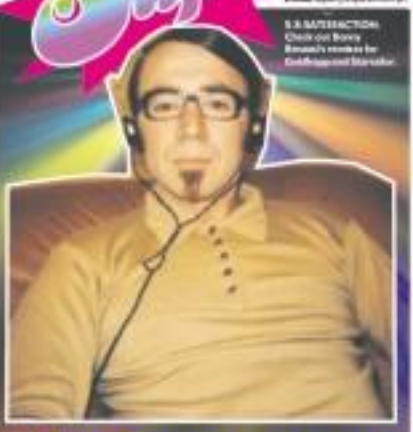

S.S.SATISFACTION: Check out Boots Rosario's reviews for Undisappointed Starvaller.

I just wanna rock, DJ

NEW JACQUES CITY: Audacious producer Jacques Lu Cont

Just when you thought dance-rock was dead, it gets re-re-remixed

Like musical mercenaries and Capulets, there was a time back in the day when punk and dance weren't allowed to eyeball—much less hip-dance—each other. And really, that was a no-brainer, since no one from the rock world seemed to give a shocking turd about what was going on in the underground dance scene—and vice-versa—anyway.

Until the early '90s, that is, when our multitalented forebears majorly messed up the rock-dance experience with a band called Happy Mondays. If Lou and Claire succeeded in getting modest in a teenage body room, that early-'90s lyrical duo was a pearly, grizzly death.

Then sometime two or three years ago, the visceral thrill of '90s-esque indigenous electro, electro-pop, rock, and synth-rock looked ready for a dance, ushering the necessity of sex—fabulously disinformed and hung over—to the finished-at list of music called indie dance. Many Philipacific gems would ring in protest, but The Rapture's "House of Jealous Lovers" eloquently crystallized that spirit.

But now that two middle-American routes are hopping off the Brooklyn-bound L train to "party" in Bedford, the genre—and the culture it's birthed with it—has fallen from hipster grace. Outside the other music bubble, however, dance-punk is still fairly significant. It just needs to shuffle around and borrow new-ish tricks again. Cue dance-punk house music!

Dead Kandi?

In a worldwide movement, dance-music-it-self has also been forced to work in calls. There was a time when kids lined up to wear an expensive T.S. But today you'd be brighter for thinking that dubbing was new and meaningless and everyone with it and/or under 30 listened to sunny guitar-based rock, the kingpins of the second.

Once everyone feels special and famous in his or her own way, old worship is now passé. Why line up to listen to DJs when you can be one yourself? This DIY ethos, the hallmark of our post-hysterical feeling generation, has spawned unprofessional clubbing experiences—one another brings his or her own music to the club (normally in blackberry) or rents his or her own night exclusively for buddies.

This bedroom-of-a-club vibe appeals to a broader, more eclectic demographic, as proven by the success of somewhat dandified live parties by Mashbuger in the West Village, NYC and Flower and Bees in Manila. Though the two scenes are on opposite sides of the ocean, they run parallel to each other. They both want to take dance back to its early days and remove it from the soundgear ring scene it has become.

New rock 'n roll rukbook

To push buttons on the floor once again, several dance music dudes have taken a page from the rock 'n roll rulebook. If dance-punk marked the pleasure of early dance spleen with the element, post-hysterical dance of punk, remixed dance-punk/dance-rock means the grotesque overcoffee.

"The gonna rip is all loud due and what you wanna hear/But don't what I'll do," begins the opening line of Adam Fernhall's dance-based cookie of the White Stripes' classic "Seven Nation Army." In less overexploited hands, combining the traditional chords, beat-wedding, and choreography of rock with house music hyper's may sound like a loopy brawl. But make no mistake, Fernhall knows the craft; his club-friendly bootleg remixes of Kimya's "Bandits Like Bees Spirit" and The Cure's "Hello I Love You" are strangely familiar dead-ends to the dance, punk, and dance-punk genres.

Another frontrunner in best is Jacques Lu Cont, a U.K. Remix Prize. Beginning first on the radar at Les Rhythmes Digitales, he really got the tongues of the gig-going community wagging with his expert old-head remixes of The Killers' "My Jeopardize" and Goldfish's "Tells." By the way, the dance remix of The Killers' "Somebody Told Me" you may have heard in Smirnoff's new 1's in the morning is by Josh Harris.)

Creating even more dance-rock dystopia is DJ Benny Benassi. If you think his remixed remix of "Feels Like" by Goldfrapp is ace, wait till you download his groovy mash-up of Interpol's "Rest In The Floor" and The Mission and "Set Apart's "California Dreaming." For the ladies, Deep Dish has also done the early to Fleetwood Mac's Stevie Nicks, resulting in the brilliant and really popular "Dreams 2006."

Remixing the chaos

If the last few years of the '90s were dedicated to rave culture and the first few years of this decade were all about indie rock, my own crystal ball says the closing years of the Zeroes will see the rave merging...and remerging—at the rock-n-roll room stillbirth with built-in indie base. The remixing of remixes of remixed-out soundtracks, but the trinity seems to have declared for now.

2005 name-checked groups like ICD Soundsystem, Hard N, Bar Rey, Interpol, Franz Ferdinand, and The Futureheads on the purveyors of sanitized cool. Somewhere in the world of retro connect known as Limewire, however, new house versions of those bands' recent hits are making into the dance as we speak.

Whether or not they're simply one-to-essential superjuices of punk glister, remixed dance-punk-or dance-punk-house, the remixing isn't an end. It's a start. It will change anything, not there or present. What should you do then if you're an indeed new-generation music fan? I suggest making out the least raucous scenes you can find. Because although now is not a great time to be a spoiler, it's still an awesome moment to let the pattern of the song, hear the DJ get academic and dance your ass off.

Tales of the (red) Tape

FOR SOME REASON, THE MONTH OF MAY BRINGS out the most stressful levels of human suffering in our beloved bureaucracy. Behold, ladies and gents, three true-to-life horror tales of red tape!

NBI Files and the revenge of the Angry Fingerprinting Man

Under the scorching midday sun, a long line snaked around a dusty concrete street. This is the queue for the NBI clearance, which one needs for employment or travel abroad, or until's that one is a law-abiding citizen without a criminal record. In this particular satellite office of the NBI, much of the main spoils, a yellow sign posted on the bulletin was in particular piqued my attention. It read, [and I quote] replacement for this statement of fact].

"Aha...#2"

"Damn...#1"

Its apparently, in these hallowed offices, your ah's outmatch a higher value. A postscript under the reasonable jobs list explained that the fees are needed to maintain the bureaucrat's cleanliness. Moving along on the subject of human waste, there were more signs posted everywhere to direct the clueless applicant to his query. Translated roughly from tagalog, the signs read:

Counter 1—This is the station where you pay the exact fee.

Counter 2—This is for those who need to renew their NBI clearance, but if you're a new applicant, go directly to ...

Counter 3...This is where you get your applications form. Fill this out in full, but before you fill it out you can go first to ...

Counter 4—This is where you have your digital photo taken. Once you're done with this, fill out your application form and then go to ...

"Data Checking" Counter—This is where you have your form checked by the official in charge [who is usually out on an early lunch or coffee break, but if you're lucky, you'll catch him and thereby acquire his prized signature, which is really just a squiggle that resembles a dead fly). After you acquire this squiggly dead fly, you must get in queue once again for ...

Fingerprinting line 1—Ah, now this line got to be my favorite one. See, once you've crushed the soul of the line, you'll promptly discover that there's an Angry Fingerprinting Man in charge of grabbing your hand, smearing your five fingers down on a wet ink pad, and making sure you put the correct fingerprint mark on the corresponding space on the application. Only now do we see whether his job position was created because people couldn't differentiate between their right thumb and middle finger. Anyway, what cracks me up is that this guy was just...well, absolutely mark, seeing mad that he screamed at every individual, "Bastu ka lang! Ano ba! Gusong mong idio and kamay?! Ulang kulala ca yun?!" (I thought the anxiously woman in front of me was going to have a coronary, as she helplessly gave out her lung hand to the angry fingerprinting Man. With your finished digits, you then head to the ...

"Pic Taken Line—Here you grab a wet tissue wrapped in plastic in order to wipe off the ink from your stained fingers. Of course, only after you've torn open the plastic envelope will you find out there is indeed not an extra P5 for the priceless square of tissue.

The "Whatever" line—to truth, I don't know what this queue is for, except that you have to line up again, in order to show your application form to yet another clerk-by, who'll tell you that you are OK to line up for ...

Fingerprinting line number 2—Line Fingerprinting Line 1, except this time you know how to keep the angry Fingerprinting Man from screaming in your face. As you walk outside the office, you see another sign, "Huwag ipahid ang fingerprints sa pader." It's pained smack in the middle of the wall covered in black fingerprints, echoing a testament to the sign's effect.

Salvaging...finally! After letting lose a snore half a day pass, you are now awarded your precious NBI clearance that states you are not a criminal in this country. Of course, by this time, you don't start feeling a bit murderous, if not, mercifully timetable.

Oh my, the DTI!

The soundtrack to this story should be "Waterproom Rain."

Those who are innocently within the orbit of the advertising world would tell you horror stories about the DTI office. Whether they are first or second hand narratives, the theme is similar—it is a journey to the very bowels of hell; a gripping tale of survival, but not without losing a part of one's soul. For the uninitiated, the treasured item is a permit number one needs to secure to legalize any sort of promotional activity

Sound Bite

Other Super! 24/7 events:

May 6, Saturday

May 7, Sunday

May 8, Monday

May 9, Tuesday

May 10, Wednesday

May 11, Thursday

Absurdist accounts of our bureau-crass-y

The Post Office at Purgatory

I received a slip of paper stating that I had to claim a package at the parcel section of the post office. At first I was afraid, like Gloria Gaynor, because I thought it would be another day of lining up outside the gates of hell. But when I got to the parcel office, I thanked my lucky instant metal that there was no queue.

Behind the counter, in the far end of the wall, was a decrepit old man sticking medallion inside a translucent nylon other than the Brazilian Scrolls. I waved my piece of paper at him, but he ignored me, perhaps he is blind. A woman walked out from the adjacent room, took my slip of paper, then presented a crusty brown notebook where I'm supposed to affix my signature. Suddenly, two kids, apparently her children, came up to her to ask for their fares, and she starts arguing with them for almost ten minutes while I'm standing there like the invisible Woman, waiting for her to hand me my freaking parcel. When her kids climb away, she finally remembered that I exist and hands me—what...the piece of paper again? I have to pay a P35 fee. Upsides, I paid it, came back and handed her my receipt, which was for me to call on another woman inside the adjacent room to get it. That other woman, who would have been annoyed by a customer popped up with bulimia, opened another folder to register my receipt. At this point, I am about to scream out, "hand me my motherf@#*$ package!"

Just about then—holy kamote! The Decrepit Old Man sticking at the corner came to life! He took out a box, and to an address I recognized to be my friend's city in France. The Decrepit Old Man brought it on a table and "inspected it." In other words, he brutally roared at the box for about five painstaking minutes, turned it over, shook it a bit again, caressed the words tape, stared at it again in a somewhat tense, until which some alien force finally informed him that the box had no explosive material inside. He handed it over to me. And to add to apologies to this absurdist tale, he asked, "OK ba si France?" I give him a thumbs up, and he returned to his corner, to once again turn into stone.

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Cafe, Sagalahot DJ Thorndale & Bird, DJ Bailey Jeff at Temple

May 12, Friday

Slam Poet Live to Martial at Avenida Collisseo, Bhoney Spank, Sheena, Bellarina, Salamin, & Bobby Park's Movement at Sagada; Brian Escalante at Bontage Greenbelt; Jay-R Music Monsoon; Asia Ayala at Discomania; DJ Emerie Star at Embassy Club; Roundtable at Mall; DJ Maria Garcia at Compaq Cubing; DJ Bird at Government; Jen-K Bayo at Temple; The Junks at The Bistro; Gaga Fridays at Bed

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more info call 247-7447 or (0949 (Globe) and 0918 (Smart) Submit your schedules before Wednesday to

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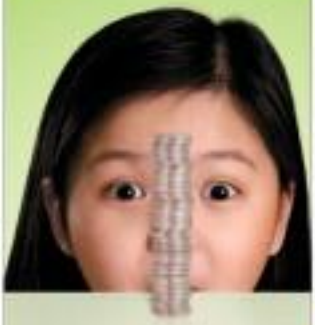

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Sound Bites

24/7

Paolo R. Reyes
Janina Cuenco-Diorio

MUNCHKINS ARE THE NEW POSTS. Time machine wisdom waits over the airwaves and hits you squarely in the head. So the next time you find yourself tongue-tied, take your cue from the lyrics these idiotic brains live by. Go ahead, quote yourself happy!

Rico Blanco
vocalist, Silverstars

Talking one-on-one talking engage-ish ad'ya'll so me nae lang-uyupanels ang bagong T-shirt ko.

—"Uyy!" (Live feeds)

★ Rivermaya performs live at the 2006 MTV Asia Awards tonight in Bangkok, Thailand. Catch them at Conspiracy on May 19, PEC on May 12, CCP Grounds on May 13, Cebu Coliseum on May 17, and Subic Island on May 20.

Cynthia Alexander
singer-songwriter

We're captive on the carousel of time/We can't return, we can only look behind from where we came/And go round and round and round/To the music game.

—"The Circle Game" (Joni Mitchell)

★ Catch Cynthia Alexander at Conspiracy tonight at 9 p.m., 70s Bistro on May 20, Party Cafe'e at Ayo on May 26, and at the Kalayaan festival (Camarines Sur, Bicol) on May 27.

Marc Abaya
vocalist, 6Cyclemind

But the first on the list/Was the sun going down/And the stars in the sky/And the sky/And spinning round.

—"The End Of The Day" (The Wallflowers)

★ Catch Rivers of the 2nd Month Jam (5-10 by Parking Lot, Greenhills) on May 10, Moonbow on May 13, and at Sagada and Mountain Fair on May 21.

Arni Millare
vocalist & keyboardist, Dp. 3 Storms Brew

Cosmic Amigos/Until one on all how/Take relax you away in smoke

—"Drift" (Portal Uproot)

SAMANNAH (Lumos 10/06)

★ Catch Ayo Sharma Band at the Bel-Air Courtyard Events tonight at 9 p.m., Conspiracy on May 6, and Sagada on May 5 & 27.

Laurel de Veyra
vocalist, Radioactive Sago Project

And we're just another piece of the puzzle/Just another jar's of the place/How was life lost/Are the odds/To us hard to understand.

—"Take Place The World Began" (Survivor)

★ Catch Radioactive Sago Project at Sagada on May 11, The Fort on May 18, Be Resident Jazz Bar on May 19, and at the Kalayaan festival (Camarines Sur, Bicol) on May 27.

Savannah Lumos
Solo singer

"Doesn't matter/you said I wasn't ok/I'll stop the world and melt with you.

—"Melt With You" (Modern English)

★ Catch Savannah Lumos at the launch of her album tonight at Conspiracy.

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Super

With a capital L

By Tim Yap
Photos by Lopez Nava

NOTHING EXCITES ME MORE THAN NEW talent that feels the scene with a newfound energy, prompting an avalanche of creativity that gives the backstory the right lens to records.

Welcome Lope Nava. His sexy and surreal images of luminous men and women have been gracing the journals in a bold and fearless way that gives me goose bumps to no end. I first saw his work in 8Ice Magazine and have since been a believer on his latest addition to the timeless art and enjoyment that our town boasts of.

Super has worked with him to last week's spread of Kazzia Reyes and Simon Cornelius, and the response has been nothing short of amazing. Recently, he staged a one-man-show at Slate, where his works of body art were displayed on the walls of the revered party spot.

Here is an unbridled an opposition of things to come.

SELF-PORTRAIT of the Super3 artist

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Finally, everything you've ever wanted and **more** – only at FRONTERA VERDE!

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More than a spa ... it's a Wellness Mall offering all you need under one roof, so you can enjoy a sense of well-being all the time.

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SUPER! SELECTIONS

Kicking Habits

By Pam Pastor

YOUR NEXT FEW WEEKENDS will be rife with action—and flying balls—if Instituto Cervantes had anything to say about it.

This month, they will be screening four football movies...a tribute to a sport that is also a symbol of regional rivalries in Spain. The screenings will be held in anticipation of the Football World Cup.

"Dias de fútbol," which will be screened today at 6:15 p.m., is about a group of friends who are football-as-clergy. Each person has his own story. There's Jorge, with his difficult job and a girlfriend who just dumped him; Gonzalo

"REAL, la película"

"El portero"

the law student who needs resources to his life; Carlos who is desperate to become a great actor but couldn't get a break; and Antonio, who had just gotten out of prison, [illegible] by the amount of drama—that film is actually a comedy.

"El portero," which will be screened on May 12 at 6:15 p.m., was directed by Gonzalo Suárez. It is the story of a goalkeeper who finds himself in the midst of political rebellion after the bloody Spanish Civil War. He joins the rangers to encourage the operations of a repressive regime.

"El pasado nos largo del mundo," which will be screened on May 20 at 6:15 p.m., is about Fernando the reserve goalkeeper of a regional football team who has not played for a single minute during the entire season. He finds his chance to shine during the final game of the league.

"Real, la película," directed by Iñaki Alonso, will be screened on Saturday, May 27 at 6:15 p.m. This documentary about Spanish soccer club Real Madrid, which continues fiction and reality traces the history of the club and its fans. David Seribano, Raúl González, Ivanilton Zidane, Ronaldo and many other big football names can be seen in the film.

If you want to watch any of the movies, head over to #555 T.M. Kalaw St. 1000 Ermita, Manila. Admission is free.

But if football isn't your thing, you can check out the book launching of Instituto general Dupuy from the Pine Automatons, el Congreso en Hi-Hispanic Architecture on May 16, 7 p.m.

You can also check out the exhibit of frames from Don Quijote Movies which features 40 posters from different countries...all featuring films based on Don Quijote de la Mancha.

The exhibit will run until May 31, 2006.

Tel: manila.cervantes.or.ph e-mail: cervmla@cervantes.es

"DIAS de fútbol"

TIENDESITAS : PINOY'S BEST EVERYDAY!

Tiendesitas is Pasig City's newest shopping and family entertainment destination owned by Ortigas & Company, one of the Philippines' most respected names in the real estate and property development industry. It is managed by Greenhills Shopping Center, the country's value shopping mecca. Inaugurated last September 26, 2005, Tiendesitas is expected to reveal the highly successful and world-renowned Chatuchak Market in Bangkok, Thailand.

Located at the corners of Ortigas, Julia Vargas, and E. Rodriguez (C-5) Avenues in Brgy. Ugong, Pasig City, Tiendesitas caters primarily to value-conscious foreign and domestic shoppers. It showcases the best the Philippines can offer – native food, fashion wear and accessories, furniture, antiques, handicrafts, personal care and novelty items, pets, plants, and other proudly Philippine-made products.

Tiendesitas sits on a 30,000 sq.m. area within Frontera Verde, an exclusive 18.5-hectare Ortigas development project. It houses 12 parcelmes, called "villages", which are of Mariman-inspired architecture. Indigenous materials were used such as limited capiz glass for the roof, old cubicle wheels transformed into chandelier frames, and discarded scaffolding reused to allow short breaks amidst forested shopping activities. The result is a stylized and unique Filipino architecture and is a novel interpretation of the conventional bahay kubo. The design of the complex also gave attention to the needs of the disabled and elderly.

More than 450 traders from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao are offering specialty merchandise from all the regions. Haggling aficionados in the mood as shoppers discover the treasures and pleasures of Philippine-made goods and products.

At night, shoppers can be wooed to scenario and live band performances. There is also an area dedicated to special shows, exhibits, and unique Filipino presentations. Kids and adults can also enjoy riding the kalesa which goes around Tiendesitas. Shopping hours are from 12 noon to 12 midnight, daily.

Because you want something different.

More than a tiangge... TIENDESITAS is a new twist to the usual shopping experience!

At Tiendesitas, it's Pinoy's best, everyday!

Unearth unique buys and marvel at world-class merchandise from the various regions of the Philippines showcased in its 12 villages.

Relish food specialties like the "bagnet" of Ilocos, "tanchoy" of Iloilo, "inihaw na pusit" of Davao, and many more tasty delights.

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Confessions of an Enchanted Kingdom Coward

What does it take to kill your inner coward? A ride on Enchanted Kingdom's The Exodus

By Pam Pastor

I SQUEEZED MY EYES TIGHT AND MY hands tightly wrapped around the all-terrain vehicle's handlebars. Actually, "zoomed off" is an exaggeration. It was more like vroomed. Feeling a little more daring, I pressed my finger against the thumb-operated accelerator and I lurched forward, up a rocky hill. The whole scene—the dark sky, the rocky roads, the sound of the motors, our helmet-clad heads—reminded me of Jay Taruc's recent Pilipinas documentary the one where he and a companion hopped on motorcycles and rode from one province to another in search of the legendary manong. But unlike me, they weren't moving at a snail's pace. Unlike them, I was not on a deserted road. And there was no manong in sight. Not even close.

Re-zero in Enchanted Kingdom.

I am not a speed devil—quite the opposite actually. The only kind of speed I need is satisfied by my DSL connection. And so when I found out that the new attractions they were unveiling—Exodus the Ride—was a guided tour around a 1.5-hectare ATV track which included volcanic rocks, river terrain, logs and a suspended bridge—I wasn't exactly eager to try it. I was happy enough to just sit back and watch the others, including some actors from Exodus the Movie, which was co-produced by Enchanted Kingdom and is the inspiration behind the ride, give it a shot.

I am what you call a Classic Enchanted Kingdom Coward. You cannot make me ride the Space Shuttle, not even if you pay me. I rode the Jungle Log Jam twice and Anchors Away and Flying Fiesta once—many ages...and I think that's enough for the duration. I no longer ride the bumper cars...over the past few years, the idea of getting into a car with the intention of bumping into other cars just lost its appeal for me. I do ride the Roller Skater—the baby roller coaster—but I keep my eyes shut and scream my head off the entire time. I ride the Wheel of Fun too but I always make sure that no one spins my gondola. Kubix and the 4D Theater are my favorites but the Rio Grande Rapids is on top of my list. I can ride it ten times straight. But to be completely honest, my three favorite Enchanted Kingdom attractions are these: the tarantula, the spiral bandstand and the Milka soft serve ice cream. They're really good.

But remember had to be set aside during the launch of Exodus the Ride. I think it was the sight of so many kids hopping on the all-terrain vehicles that finally convinced me to try it. I finally got on, but not before making sure I had a safety sandwich. I made sure my friend was riding just a few feet in front of me and my boyfriend was just behind me.

Operating the ATV was easy enough. It took me all of five seconds to learn which buttons and levers to press. Gathering the courage to go faster was a little harder. But when I reached the hills, I had no choice but to hit the accelerator; to wear the only way for me to ride over them with ease. Before I started blaming all the caravans and bandags I ate for making me too heavy to hit the hills, I realized that all I had to do was increase speed.

After one lap around the track, I began to feel more comfortable and I started enjoying the sights. Props from Exodus the Movie had been strategically placed around the track for an extra touch. I was still slower than most of the riders but I was finally able to maneuver through the roads with ease. I stopped the bridge near the pool of water though and still panicked a little when I crossed it.

When I got off the ATV my hands were cold and my knees still felt a little weak from the excitement. I sought my friends while watching the Exodus Dance, which begins with a parade and becomes a full-blown concert that showcases several dancers. Different dance numbers—from boogie and classical dance to wild hip-hop beats—and colorful fireworks. My favorite part? I saw the magic show, Stellside Dance, which was choreographed and staged by director Freddie Santos me he enjoyed tonight, concerts and so May 13 and 14 at 8 p.m.

Exodus the Ride is a big thrill—for speed freaks, for adventure seekers and even for big cowards like me. And I wasn't done with my attempts yet.

The following week, I continued my destroying love affair with Exodus the Ride. Armed with my newest pass, we hit the Enchanted King dom again and headed for the ATV track first. We watched the safety video which repeatedly stressed, "This is not a race, this is a guided tour." Although I was feeling a little more confident, I was still slow. So slow that the man-shell had to signal to the marshall of the other group to move forward and leave us behind. For the longer I stayed on the track, the more comfortable I felt. Pings were crying in over the road and I maneuvered the ATV smoothly to avoid running them over. I think I deserve extra points for saving the lives of several frogs. At 2 none for two but lap around the track, I became overjoyed, revving the dark sky into a scream for the colorful night lights. I knew the fireworks were for the Fireworks Dance but I'd like to think they were also there to celebrate the death of my inner coward. Maybe next time, I'll even get the guts to ride the Space Shuttle.

Visit www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph or in ogbo or Dial 18 Bilmore Condominium, Ayala St., Ayala Village, Makati. Call 4302123 or 26.

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Why Can't I?

By Liz Pluie

Verse 1
Get a load of me, get a load of you
Makin' eyes across the room, and I hardly know you
It's just like we were meant to be

Holding hands with me, what we're out on night
Got a gold band, you up in my tight
And I've got someone waiting for

What's this a just the beginning
Me's already two, and we're gonna go swimming

Why can't I breathe whenever I think about you
Why can't I speak whenever I talk about you
It's unbelievable, it's a fact that we're gonna go down in
In all of us
Why can't I breathe whenever I think about you

Look why the hurt part of breakin' up
Finding someone else you can't get enough of
Someone who wants to be with you too

It's not in how long we've gonna or split
Gonna take a while for this egg to hatch
But wouldn't it be beautiful

We're all go, we're at the beginning
We have it (*vibes, but my head's spinning

Why can't I breathe whenever I think about you
Why can't I speak whenever I talk about you
It's unbelievable, it's a fact that we're gonna go down
In all of us
Why can't I breathe whenever I think about you

High enough for you to make me smile
What's it to you
High enough for you to pull me under
Somewhere's power
Out of this darkness we created
Baby I can drive

Why can't I breathe whenever I think about you
Why can't I speak whenever I talk about you
It's unbelievable, it's a fact that we're gonna go down
In all of us
Why can't I breathe whenever I think about you

Video directed by XAVIER ANGELES
Style styled by PRILLY ARZAGA
Associate producer DAVID KILAN
Facial effects LALA FLORES using FACE IT
makeup line from PERSHOPPE
Earrings VICTOR BASA and MIKU GIL
Creative costumes by PERSHOPPE

Because you want it to drive you wild.

More than a car showroom... it's a one-stop store that's unlike anything you've seen before!

Get the car of your dreams, or spend the day dreaming about fantastic choices. Whichever it is, the Auto Mall at Frontera Verde is just the place for you.

Browse through car models on display at 80 car showrooms, or get those accessories you've always fancied to make your vehicle a sure head-turner.

It's the supreme stop where you'll find everything you need to make your ride a breeze!

At FRONTERA VERDE, you get the widest and most diverse shopping, dining, and leisure options. That means more choices, more savings, more finds... and more fun!

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FRONTERA VERDE

Because you want more!

A premier development of Ortigas & Company Limited Partnership

Because your kids want a new experience.

More than a recreational area... it's a park packed with fun and educational activities, right in the heart of the city!

Spend an unforgettable day with your kids at the Fun Ranch at Frontera Verde.

Have fun at the petting zoo, carousel, and interactive play areas. Family-themed restaurants and snack carts provide a welcome break as your family enjoys other attractions like a kiddie salon, photo shop, day care center, bookstore, and animal spa.

Here, you'll have total family entertainment without having to leave town!

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FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND

A. GIPH

BY DOUG ABRIAN

MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PLUGGED-BABOY

BY WIN JUNICK

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

HUTTS

BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

ATOMIC-MAD N BABY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN WINBLING

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS ORAÑE

FOR BORN TODAY You're complex. You're dramatic and confident, yet vulnerable. You're a natural leader. Anyone can be comfortable with you. You easily charm others. You're also independent. You need freedom to mold your relationships. At age 40, you begin to value family closeness much more for the rest of your life. By 70, you're more genuine. Fresh new beginnings welcoming you this year.

Birthdays of: George Gershwin, composer; Billy Bragg, British guitar-singer; Rudolph Valentino, silent screen star.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You have big plans about how to make yourself more desirable. Before you face those uncomfortable and tense moments, thoroughly exercise techniques for handling questions.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You have very interesting ideas. Please do something today. In fact, your positive frame of mind automatically attracts good luck and good fortune to you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) It's not easy to be a leader. You can see that another does is one-time action. Your plans and arrangements encounter unexpected.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You're very attractive to others. Do something today. In fact, your positive frame of mind automatically attracts good luck and good fortune to you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Pay more attention to your activity with co-workers today. You have a tendency to work on behalf of others. Many of you will accept a charity or civic responsibility to help needy children.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You're extremely effective now. Do other whatever you want, but you are fortunate! Answers have to help you now. You have Lady Luck on your side.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) This is a marvelous day for education, writing, dealing with the public, travel and dealing with foreign countries. Be careful not to overdo the day. People love you everyday!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You can help others today. You will work on behalf of others, or you will work directly with them yourself. Your ability to relate to others is high. Be sure to express yourself physically as well. Helping them "with their problems. (This is good.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Work goes well today. Someone wants to help you. Don't ask if there's a catch. Just accept it and say "thank you." Success is assured.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) This is a marvelous day to get out. You feel very good about your health today. Use this energy to get in shape. Work hard, but not to the point of serious exhaustion today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Don't be afraid to take strong stand today. Take a chance asking someone out or presenting your point. Be tactful but not afraid to have fun today. (You're allowed.)

DAILY CROSSWORD

By Matthew Higgins
Universal, AP

Answers to Puzzle Shown

BEAN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE

BY DOUG ABRIAN

LOVEBOATS

BY ELIZABETH CROWFOOT

TULDOK

BY RAFO AND SITUH MUHIMBUNG

Because you want a sense of wellbeing.

More than a spa... it's a Wellness Mall that will recharge your body and refresh your spirit!

Find everything you need to stay in top shape at the Wellness Mall, only at Frontera Verde.

Here, you can have access to doctors' offices, HMOs, health centers, spas, medical laboratories, medical equipment stores, optical shops, and other medical services.

It's definitely all you need to enhance your wellbeing under one roof!

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SMART IDD

SA BAWAT TAWAG MO ABROAD, NEGOSYO ANG HATID SA'YO!

SA SMART IDD PANGKABUHAYAN PROMO!

Bawat tawag abroad ay raffle entry mo para sa tsansang manalo!

Prizes include:

- Jeepney of your choice worth up to P400,000 (4 winners)
- Tricycle of your choice worth up to P80,000 (5 winners)
- Goods of your choice worth up to P50,000 for Pangkabuhayan Business (4 winners)
- SMART e-load business via SMART SIM with P10,000 worth of load (50 winners)

To register : Just text

IDD REG <complete name> <complete address> <age> <gender>

and send to 232

Registration is free. You will receive a reply message verifying your registration.

To check the raffle entries accumulated : Just text

IDD

and send to 232

P2.50/text.

SMART Prepaid subscribers (Buddy, TALK 'N' TEXT, AMP, SMART Kid) nationwide may join the promo from April 8 (12MN) to June 30 (11:59 PM) 2006.

Grand raffle draw will be held at MOLIVAC, PLDT Vitro Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City on July 5, 2006 at 2 PM to be witnessed by a BIR Representative under the supervision of SMART Communications Inc. and Ace Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Agency.

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